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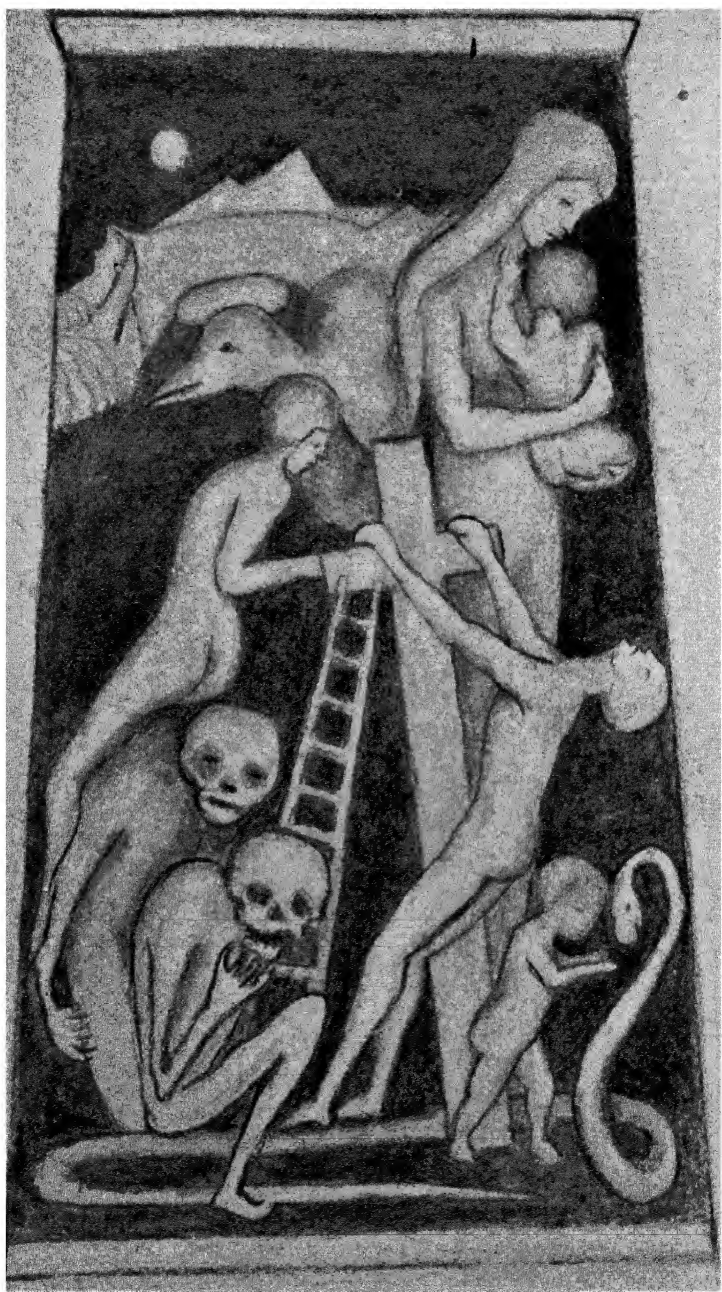


THE LOGIC OF THE  
UNCONSCIOUS MIND

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## DRAWING TO ILLUSTRATE FANTASIES OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

The drawer says: 'Any one will see that I am ignorant of anatomy and without technical skill. I took a sheet of paper and looked at it, and saw figures, some clear, some obscure and changing. I tried to catch them before they disappeared, and outlined them with charcoal. Afterwards I went over the charcoal with a pencil. As I drew them I did not know what they meant. Looking at them again, they seemed to me to symbolise 'Progress' as described in the course of this book. At the lowest stage there is childish innocency, and the primitive terror of dead bodies and of monstrous animals. The 'ladder of emancipations' (see p. 205), and the cross of self-sacrifice, lead upwards, with struggle and suffering, to the maternal outlook on life, and the 'calmer regions, clearer lights' of abstract thought. A figure which means 'art' or 'the beautiful' is firmly seated on the primitive, and rises to the advanced, through the 'saintly goose' of Christian art. Other people might see other meanings. The whole forms an Egyptian stone-work which seems to signify that it is as old as man."





# THE LOGIC OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

BY

M. K. BRADBY

“What then is that which is able to conduct a man?  
One thing and only one, philosophy.”

MARCUS AURELIUS.

“Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and godlike reason  
To fust in us unus’d.”

HAMLET.

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## PREFACE

THIS book purports to be a sketch, not a finished thesis, for which indeed the author would be ill qualified. It presents a view of logic and of life obtained by one who sees them in strong colours, but misses subtleties, and perhaps much else.

The question arises whether an author is not in a false position who, it must be confessed, cannot even understand most books on philosophy, and yet who enters the lists of philosophical discussion. The justification, if it amount to one, is this: that many people are in like case. They are interested in philosophical problems that present themselves in the course of daily life; they think and talk about these things, but turning to books for enlightenment, find most writers on philosophy above their heads. It is this section of the reading public whom the author aspires to address.

Her own interest in logic was kindled early in the century by the works of John Stuart Mill, and by the teaching of Miss E. E. Constance Jones.

Prof. Hobhouse's *Theory of Knowledge*, published in 1906, seemed to her to mark an epoch in the history of thought; and yet, for all that, to leave an indefinite veil concealing the line of future progress.

Some twenty years later Mr. Sturt, in his *Principles of Understanding*, hinted at the veil's removal, but meanwhile, Prof. Freud of Vienna, working in another field, had already lifted it. His *Dream Interpretation* opens up the mysterious hinterland of the unconscious mind to many seekers on divers quests.

The quest pursued in these pages is the tracing of one characteristic of mind, namely the rational. It will be

noticed at different levels of consciousness in the individual, and glanced at as it develops in the race.

Introspection must always remain the fundamental method of psychology, and introspection has had its range increased and its method varied by the so-called "analysis" of dreams. In dreams, it is claimed, we rediscover primitive modes of thought, and gain a clue to the obscure effects of unconscious elements on advanced thought and action.

Not only Psychology, but Anthropology as well, has taken a stride forward of late years, while every would-be student is endowed with Dr. Frazer's garnered material for research. These two branches of science illuminate each other, and both throw light on Logic.

So vast is the subject of this book that only an enthusiastic amateur would dare attack it on so small a scale. Its aim is to stimulate enquiry along progressive lines. Its defects would be greater had it not been for friends who have helped the author to make her meaning clearer, whether agreeing with it or not. She has specially to thank Barbara Hammond on this account, as well as Mary Fletcher, Hugh Bradby, Norman Buss and Hermia Durham.

*July 1920.*

## INTRODUCTION

LOGIC has seemed to many people in modern times a dry and abstract study only remotely connected with real life, but this, we venture to think, is because the science has to be re-formed, for we have outgrown the logic of our forefathers, just as we have outgrown their chemistry—a fact which leading logicians are quick to recognise. The student of logic to-day is called upon to give the subject a fresh start, and this he is enabled to do by the discoveries of Psycho-analysts concerning the Unconscious Mind. Equipped with a new understanding of human motives, he has to look at people's reasoning, his own and others', and see what connecting principles may be observed, what general laws are actually in operation.

It is the recognised task of the logician to discover and formulate those natural laws which a man follows whenever he reasons. But how does any one actually reason? He pursues a train of thought pushed by instincts of which he is totally unconscious; he jumps to conclusions in a manner which is intuitive and largely unconscious; and at the same time he overlooks some objects deserving attention and heaps fantasy on to others, because he finds them a symbolical expression of his undercurrent of desires and interests.

The bulk of reasoning—as again modern logicians recognise—is chiefly concerned with purposes and their achievement.<sup>1</sup> Man is always trying to do things, “to do the truth,” as the Old Testament has it, as well as

<sup>1</sup> H. Sturt's *Principles of Understanding*, 1914, throughout, e. g. p. 238.

to know the truth, and he does things more effectively when he reasons rightly, thought and action being, as it were, two sides of one whole.

But to a large extent the conscious aims of mankind would seem to be defeated rather than fulfilled, and we may surmise his reasoning is at fault. At no time was the contrast between the purpose and achievement of human society more striking than at the present.

A few years ago the recognised aim of the civilised world was to establish peace. This purpose was frustrated. The nations plunged into a world-war without clearly seeing the causes which led up to it, or the motives with which it was pursued. But in the preceding period of peace, the contrast, if less striking, was not less actual, and many collective purposes were habitually baffled. The best brains of the community were put together to devise and carry out plans for practicable social aims, but somehow or other those aims were not attained.

It was not the purpose of the peoples of Europe that two individuals, little trusted for their judgment, exchanging private telegrams, should decide the destinies of peace and war. Nor was it the purpose of any civilised people to perpetuate the degraded poverty, or the devastating ugliness, of the manufacturing town, with its vast mass of narrow, undeveloped lives. Rather was it the purpose of advanced communities to make such things impossible, and a great amount of effort, individual and collective, was continually directed to this end.

This failure of modern civilisation is partly due to defective logic. We have certain ends in view, but do not select appropriate means. Causes are there, bound to produce effects, but we reason wrongly and expect them to produce quite other effects. Grounds exist whence conclusions follow, but we think we can evade the consequences by ignoring the grounds.

Our failure in achievement is, however, partial, for

partly we succeed, and the conscious purposes of mankind are being fulfilled, however slowly. Humanity fights a winning battle. Great as are the forces of the enemies of progress, who can doubt that they are weaker to-day than ever before in the history of the world?

Never before has there existed so large a number of free men and women with developed minds and bodies, possessed of wealth enough to provide themselves with leisure for thought. Or, if we measure progress by quality rather than by quantity—sporadic genius aside—no age has produced a type of man superior to the best of the professional and working-classes in Europe and America to-day. Not only are the people of the world richer, more powerful and more effective than ever before, but they are also more humane. If in certain moods we be inclined to doubt it, we may well apply the touchstone of history to the case.

We look to-day at the suffering of Central Europe and learn that the race of man is callous and vindictive still; but the horror of the present should not blind us to a misery as great and far more habitual in the past. It is wholesome to recall the Age of Chivalry, when Frenchmen leading armies of Frenchmen, plundered and devastated the fairest districts of the homeland; when Simon de Montfort the elder,<sup>1</sup> “the General of the Holy Ghost,” waging war against heretics in Southern France, slew all whom he encountered, regardless of age, sex or religion, and that with the applause of official Christendom.

Or, to glance at later times, have we not already far outgrown the conscience of the Commonwealth, when Cromwell, that man of lofty character and high ideals, could bid his soldiers burn and slay, not the men only, but the women and children of Wexford and Drogheda, and see in the opportunity “a marvellous great mercy of God”?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Father of our own Simon.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Speeches*, ed. T. Carlyle, 1887, II. 171–2 and 196.



Nor do we need to look back further than the eighteenth century for a vivid and tonic realisation of the progress made by Englishmen in justice and humanity.

Future ages may judge the twentieth century guilty of cruelty to children—children whose parents were loyal to their own countries and whose misery was out of 'sight. But the cruelty of our ancestors was towards the children of their native land, and it was English boys and girls who were done to death in mine and mill, or in the ken of tender-hearted ladies used as human brushes that drawing-room fires might burn more cosily.<sup>1</sup>

To those who grant the principle of democracy and count each man as one, it is impossible to doubt of human progress, a progress of which the growth of reason is both a product and a cause. To aid that progress, to detect and conquer fallacy, in order that our actions may be better and more effective, is one universal spur to logic; and the source of fallacy is judged by the modern logician to lie in human character.<sup>2</sup> Hence the task of the day for the logician is to discover mental tendencies at work which lead to wrong reasoning. These, it is maintained, are to be found in the unconscious mind. Wherever man is habitually ineffective he is illogical, and where he is illogical, he will be found to be both unconscious and primitive. As the race develops he is gradually ceasing to be either unconscious or primitive, but approaching the supremacy of his highest faculties, reason and will. The human mind is somewhere on the way to perfection, moving along the now familiar lines of organic growth, lines of "differentiation and integration." At each advancing stage some element is made explicit which before was implicit, some

<sup>1</sup> J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Town Labourer*, 1917, chapters viii and ix.

<sup>2</sup> H. Sturt, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

content of mind brought out, defined and emphasised, which already existed in embryo.

But if reason be the highest faculty yet known, there are thinkers who look for its successor, and belittle reason in their longing for that power which shall transcend it; a power, they hope, less arduous and exacting in its demands upon the will.

The power transcending reason may, however, best be served by those who develop reason itself to the height of its capacity, for analogy suggests that the new is soonest reached through developing the old.

It is, at any rate, strikingly plain that reason has not yet had its day, and that mankind, far from having outgrown logic, has not yet arrived at the stage of general explicit reasoning, but still acts largely as did its primitive forefathers, on purblind intuition or stone-blind instinct. In this book an attempt will be made to show what the science of reasoning is, how it was viewed by its originators, and what appears likely to be its future.

First, we shall examine the distinctive character of actual reasoning, and trace its development as it comes to permeate and control instinct, and to replace relatively unconscious by fully conscious inference. We shall look, too, at its unconscious work in language, where it expresses those fundamental axioms implicitly assumed in thought.

Secondly, we shall turn our attention to logical fallacy, looking for universal tendencies in the unconscious mind productive of fallacy. These tendencies we shall compare with well-marked traits in the thought of primitive peoples, and attempt a rough classification of fallacy along these lines.

Finally, we shall look at some of the outstanding problems of our own time, and of life in general, hoping to indicate the way in which, as we believe, such problems will be approached by the average citizen of the future with the aid of a rejuvenated science of logic.

It is a science which does not appeal to all, but it appeals to those people who take a natural interest in the motives underlying human thought and action, people who like to understand why men act as they do and think as they do, and how they might act more effectively and think more truly.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY—FORMAL LOGIC

Antiquity does consist in the old age of the world, not in the youth of it. In such learning as may be increased by fresh experiments and new discoveries: 'Tis we are the Fathers, and of more Authority than former Ages; because we have the advantage of more time than they had, and Truth (we say) is the Daughter of Time.—BISHOP JOHN WILKINS.

WE are invited by the author of a current textbook on logic to see in Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas "leaders on whom we can rely," because, says he, they represent, "not the newly-fangled inventions of the individual, but the traditional authority of centuries." <sup>1</sup>

Now if ever there was a new-fangled invention of an individual, it was the syllogism invented by Aristotle; and if ever any one taught his pupils not to look back, but forward, for the solution of their difficulties, it was each of these two great men and fearless thinkers.

Aristotle accepted no teaching as authoritative, neither Plato's nor the Ancients'; while as for St. Thomas Aquinas, it was above all things the newness of his doctrines which struck his contemporaries. He refused to rely on any leader, even Aristotle, in his search for truth.<sup>2</sup>

Were we loyal to our great captains of thought, we, too, should beware of resting on authority; but we have not followed their strenuous examples.

Hence it is that if young men or women wish to-day to learn engineering, or modern languages, or any other subject, at one of our ancient Universities, they

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are required to qualify by a knowledge of formal logic, imparted to them by a clear and interesting textbook which introduces the subject of logical fallacy in the following words—

“In describing the fallacies I shall follow the order and adopt the mode of classification which has been usual for the last two thousand years and more, since, in fact, the great teacher Aristotle first explained the fallacies.”<sup>3</sup>

It is seductive, irresistible—the vista of eternal verity presented to our wondering and reverent gaze: to the inexorable brilliance of mathematical certainty is added the mystery and awe of immense antiquity. It is as though we were invited to the dim and spacious recesses of some ancient cathedral, there to taste the elixir of truth, enshrined in priceless vessels, and handed down from generation to generation, of—those who can afford the fees for a Public School and University education! Magnificent and alluring, but how unlike Aristotle!

Not thus did he regard “the wisdom of the Ancients,” the truths won by his predecessors two thousand years before. Not thus did he neglect the new discoveries of his time, as we are asked to disregard the doctrine of evolution, that truth which divides our world of thought from his, by bringing into consciousness the notion of progressive change.<sup>4</sup> Another Aristotle would unite with Darwin to leave our present logic high and dry. But he will not come till men prepare for him, now, as then, by a general and fearless use of the critical faculty; for an Aristotle can only be produced and appreciated by an age in which everything is questioned by everybody, and nothing is believed on the *ipse dixit* of any thinker of old.

Even those giants of thought were inevitably the children of their age, and their general outlook on the world is outgrown. We so often hear the “Ancient Greeks” quoted for their words of wisdom, that we

## STANDPOINT OF ANCIENT THOUGHT 3

forget, till reminded by Prof. Gilbert Murray and others, all that mankind has learnt in the interval which separates us. Compared with ourselves they were primitive. It is typical of our unintelligent attitude to the Classics that we should be familiar with such sayings as this: "The earth hangs free, supported by nothing," while the rest of the quotation comes to us with something of a shock: "It is convex and round like a stone pillar." <sup>5</sup>

We receive a certain impression of Heraclitus from hearing his dictum "All things flow; nothing abides." <sup>6</sup> We picture him as a sort of Monsieur Bergson, speaking words of ultra-modern wisdom, above our heads. But this type of familiar saying, quoted from Greek philosophers to show their marvellous prevision, had quite another point for themselves, as we shall see later on, while for us it only hits the mark by accident, much in the manner of a speculative guess, such as Roger Bacon's forecast of steamships, motor-cars and aeroplanes, or Bishop Wilkins' less lucky surmise that migratory birds repair to the moon and that swans might be induced to convey us thither. <sup>7</sup>

We might correct our misunderstanding of the kind of wisdom embodied in such utterances by pondering upon another saying of the seer: "From earth water springs, and from water soul." "For souls it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth." <sup>8</sup> Here we are taken back, in a flash, to the world of the primitive, where the minds of some men were at least as great as the greatest minds of to-day, but where the common stock of knowledge, of true ideas about things and the relations between things, was immeasurably smaller.

Aristotle led the thought of his time in a general and excited questioning of all things lately realised to be questionable. But even so, because he lived two thousand years ago, he was content to guess at things which his own observation might have discovered. He



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lays it down, for instance, that the back part of the human head is empty.<sup>9</sup> Or he is satisfied with superficial observation, as when he concludes that the horse has a bone in his heart.<sup>10</sup> In his world the actuality of anything was decided, as a matter of course, by its supposed inherent fitness. His own bent was towards disinterested observation of facts, and this to so marvellous a degree that he is claimed as the forerunner of modern science; but he could not altogether outstrip his age.

His was the age in which formal logic was born. Socrates had recently made a new discovery, namely, that underlying the use of any word is some general concept. Plato had elaborated this discovery. He showed how a universal idea underlies the thought of every particular object. Aristotle went further, and showed that all thought rests on universal truths, and that we cannot pass from one fact to another without universalising it; that, for instance, as soon as we recognise a thing as a tree we know something about all trees, or about any tree as such. His theory of syllogism is an explicit statement of the necessity of basing all knowledge on general or universal truths.<sup>11</sup>

This recognition—new in Aristotle's time—of the significance of a universal truth, must always seem a wonderful discovery to one who makes it. We can watch it being made in the case of Miss Helen Keller, the gifted blind and deaf-mute lady, when as a child she first realised that names were attached to things, not merely as identification marks, like proper names, but as linking them up with all other things of their kind. She already knew the names of many objects in manual sign, but she had not universalised them, had not got at the general concept underlying them. She spelled out the appropriate word in each case, much as a dog performs a trick.

She was confused between the sign for mug and the sign for milk. "It occurred to me" (says her teacher,

in the diary kept of her little pupil's progress) "that with the help of this new word (w-a-t-e-r) I might succeed in straightening out the mug-milk difficulty. . . . I made Helen hold her mug under the spout while I pumped. As the cold water gushed forth, filling the mug, I spelled 'w-a-t-e-r' in Helen's free hand. The word . . . seemed to startle her. She dropped the mug and stood as one transfixed. A new light came into her face. She spelled 'water' several times. Then she dropped on the ground and asked for its name, and pointed to the pump and the trellis, and suddenly turning round she asked for my name. . . . All the way back to the house she was highly excited, and learned the name of every object she touched." <sup>12</sup> She had universalised the names of these objects, and arrived at an abstract universal notion. "Idea," she says herself, "that which gives identity and continuity to experience, came into my sleeping and waking existence at the same moment with the awakening of self-consciousness." <sup>13</sup>

Greeks of Aristotle's time were excited, like Helen Keller, and with good reason. Not every one makes this discovery of the universal idea clear to himself.

There are languages which show that the races to which they belonged had not made it. For instance, the aborigines of Tasmania had a name for each variety of gum-tree, wattle-tree, etc.; but they had no equivalent for the expression "a tree," <sup>14</sup> and instances might be multiplied.

When the primitive first sees that a palm-tree is a tree, and a rubber-tree is a tree, and that, though it look so different, yet a mango-tree is also a tree; and that each and every tree that he has ever come across, or ever will come across, is a tree, in virtue of certain qualities common to all trees as such; then a new light comes flooding his world, revealing wonderful possibilities; order springs out of chaos, symmetry out of confusion.

•

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When civilised man makes this process of universalising reflective, and first sees the full significance of the way he has of grouping things important to himself under class names, then a light no less startling comes flooding his world of thought. This was the stage reached by the vanguard 'of thought when Plato formulated his theory of "universal ideas." There is such a thing, he taught, as a tree which yet is not any particular tree, but an ideal tree, the essence of tree-dom, of which every tree partakes.

It was a marvellous discovery, a marvellous observation of facts made by the mind of man. Not less wonderful, perhaps, was the acuteness of Aristotle's mind which, leaping over centuries to come, saw the weak points in Plato's theory and exposed them—namely, those where Plato separates the "universal" from the "particular," and thinks of a universal tree as having an actual shadowy existence somewhere in space. "It is evident," said Aristotle, "that no universals exist over and above the individual objects and separate from them." <sup>15</sup>

Such was the atmosphere in which formal logic had its rise, amongst people who were excited about universal ideas, and all that might be learnt from their application to the universe, as they conceived it.

To men of an Aristotelian turn, the universal truth expressed in a class name always had some practical interest. Such an interest would lead one to enquire what can be learnt about particular trees, for example, from a true idea of the universal. If all trees have roots, then this thing, which looks so like a tree, is none. If all trees bleed when cut, let us cut this one and examine its blood. If all trees are gods, let us not omit homage to this skimpy shrub which might revenge itself if neglected.

But it was the followers of Plato, not of Aristotle, who were to be the leaders of thought for many centuries to come, and they, like Plato's predecessors,

continued to take general principles for granted, and to apply them to facts to see what further knowledge could be deduced.<sup>16</sup>

The attitude of mind which the Middle Ages adopted from the Ancients was predominantly subjective. Plato's universals, not Aristotle's individuals, occupied men's thoughts.<sup>17</sup> Moreover the moral significance of the universe, which Plato had brought into prominence, was dwelt on, to the exclusion of the æsthetic and scientific. What was sought was "the good," and it was not yet seen that the true and the beautiful matter for their own sakes. Thus students of Natural History and of History sought chiefly to illustrate eternal truths, such as the wisdom of God, the greatness of man, and the pre-eminence of the historian's own race. This treatment produced Allegory and Fable, as it still does amongst backward peoples.<sup>18</sup>

For a thousand years thinkers in general were impressed with the importance of the part in knowledge played by the mind, and they did not realise the importance of the part played by the actual nature of the facts experienced. It was left for men of recent times, in the history of the race, to discover this. A fresh view gradually arose of the function of mind itself, a view in which "reason is nothing but organised experience seeking truth," so that "where experience gives no guidance reason is helpless."<sup>19</sup>

It is this changed outlook, this new objective standpoint, which more than anything else marks off our world of thought from Aristotle's. The old enquiry, "How do facts illustrate accepted truth?" has given place to the modern question, "What truths do facts reveal?"

The change is still in progress. Each sphere of thought is being revolutionised in turn. In the course of this book we shall look more closely at the intrinsic nature of the change and some of its broad effects. Here we would merely call attention to its magnitude; so great

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it is that inevitably the formulation of the laws of thought must change to match.

A single example will illustrate the gulf which separates us from the pre-scientific world.

We may find one in the pelican. The mediævalist, following the authorities of his church in admiration of self-sacrifice, looked upon the pelican as the emblem of a mother's love. The bird's long bill was tipped with red, and to offer its contents to the young pelican, the lower mandible was pressed against the breast. Why look too closely? Was it not consonant with the fitness of things that this bird should illustrate the beauty of sacrifice? Hence the pelican was said to tear its own breast with its bill in order to feed its young. To-day this judgment is seen to be false, because it does not tally with objective fact; the redness of the bill is not a bloodstain, and the pelican does not tear its breast. Some may see the emblem as false on another count, because impulsive and avoidable self-sacrifice does not exhibit a high type of a mother's love, that is to say, not a type which conduces to the well-being of her loved ones; it makes them selfish and cruel, and gives young pelicans the bad name they had in Shakespeare's time.<sup>20</sup> On either count the modern test of truth is a reference to facts; in the first place, a reference to the actual habits of the pelican, and in the second, to the actual results on her offspring of a mother's impulsive self-sacrifice.

There is no danger nowadays lest Science should retreat from the new standpoint she triumphantly occupies, no fear lest she should abandon the work before her of objectifying, and so of humanising, the world of knowledge; but there is always a local and temporary danger lest scientists should withdraw to remote and academic heights or arid deserts, where they fail to be understood of the people, or greatly to influence popular thought. The public, neglected by those

who should lead it, follows will-of-the-wisp guides, sincere and enthusiastic but shallow thinkers, who revert to the mediæval standpoint, and regard the realms of history, literature and science as happy hunting-grounds for man's subjective fantasy, storehouses whence they may illustrate the particular moral truths which in the popular eyes of the day are all-important.

How, it may here be asked, has the modern change of outlook affected formal logic as handed down from Aristotle? From one point of view, not at all; for Aristotle did his work so well that it remains for all time a necessary and valuable part of the subject-matter. From another point of view formal logic has been rendered obsolete.

Let us here enquire more precisely what formal logic is. Its task is to discover similarities of form amongst expressions of reasoning; to ascertain what shapes or forms are actually assumed by trains of thought which are valid and lead to just conclusions. Plato detected one such similarity of form in "the universal idea," Aristotle another, more intricate, in the shape which a train of thought assumes, whenever we conclude that something is true about a particular thing because it is true about the whole class to which that thing belongs.

"All men are mortal.

Socrates is a man.

Therefore Socrates is mortal."

This model syllogism, handed down for two thousand years, embodies a discovery which is probably made by every one at some moment in his life, when he realises for the first time that he will die. "So-and-so has died. That means that *all* people die; and I too shall die."

Logic, like charity, begins at home, and its laws may be sought in the ordinary doings of ordinary people. We know that the rules of arithmetic may help the housewife in her shopping; let us see how the rules of formal logic might help her in her daily reasoning.

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I add up my expenses for the morning and they come to five shillings, but I started out with six shillings and have brought back two shillings. There is a mistake somewhere. Was it really six shillings I started with, and have I really spent as much as five? When I look at my calculations I find that I have reckoned  $2 + 2 = 5$ , which is a mistake in arithmetic. In reality  $2 + 2 = 4$ . A knowledge of the rules of arithmetic puts me on the track of my mistake, and shows me that my purchases were fewer or less expensive than I thought.

The rules of formal logic might conceivably help me to correct mistakes in the same sort of way. For example, I have just baked a new kind of cake and am puzzled because it is burnt. What mistake have I made? I think "It *should* not have been burnt. I've done others very much like it with the same oven and they've always been baked nicely in two hours." I look to see where my calculations went wrong, and refer to Aristotle's rule that the particular must pass through the universal. I find that I am assuming that because the cakes to which I am used take two hours, the same time would do for this one. I see that I must not argue from the cakes I happen to know to *all* cakes. There may be cakes which need four hours, while for some kinds half an hour may be enough. I must be open-minded, ready to test my conclusions by referring them to a universal truth.

Or it may be that I am a University Professor who have withstood "votes for women" all my life, and often proved in argument that when women had votes the country would go to the dogs. Now they have votes, but I admit that the country is not yet in canine possession, and I look to see where I went wrong. There are some women known to me (and I have no doubt there are plenty more) who are totally unfit to vote, or to use any political influence they may have with sense or judgment. In my opinion these women

should not have a vote. I have concluded that none should have it—which does not follow.

These two fallacious arguments can be reduced to formulas not unlike those of arithmetic.

I. <i>Major premiss</i> :	M Some cakes	i are	P things which take two hours to bake.
<i>Minor premiss</i> :	S This object	a is	M a cake.
<i>Conclusion</i> :	S ∴ This object	a is	P a thing which takes two hours to bake.

II. <i>Major premiss</i> :	M No people unfit to vote	e are	P people who should be given the vote.
<i>Minor premiss</i> :	S Some women	i are	M people unfit to vote.
<i>Conclusion</i> :	S ∴ No women	e are	P people who should be given the vote.

The argument thus set out displays a kind of pattern, and we may consult the rules of the syllogism to ascertain whether the pattern is correct and the conclusion valid, or whether the pattern is irregular and the conclusion fallacious. We find it is irregular, for a universal conclusion is obtained when one of the premisses is not universal.<sup>21</sup> Thus bad logic can be detected by its making a pattern which is not according to rule.

These are two false syllogisms displaying the “fallacy of the undistributed middle term.” We cannot rightly infer a conclusion about *all* Ss or Ps, or about *no* Ss or Ps (that is to say, a universal conclusion), when the middle term which connects them with each other only applies to some of them, and not to all (that is to say, is not distributed over the whole field of Ss and Ps). If I had said *all* cakes take two hours to bake, or *all* women are unfit to vote, then my conclusions would have been logically sound.

Now as a matter of fact it may be doubted whether even the enthusiastic logician tests his reasoning in



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everyday life by applying to it the rules of the syllogism. But a grasp of their principles helps us to reason more correctly, and at least to detect other people's fallacies.

The blind-spot which leads a man to make any mistake, as a rule prevents him from seeing it when made; but he can view his neighbour's mistakes dispassionately, with clearer eyes, and all the more so for having given himself a course of the mental gymnastics of formal logic.

Another objection to formal logic, as already hinted, is more serious.

In everyday life most of the actual processes of reasoning are rather expressions of purpose than statements of fact; thrown into the mould of "I intend or desire to do such-and-such a thing," rather than of "all men are mortal." But with this sort of statement formal logic has no natural method of dealing. It can only treat it in a strained and artificial manner by pretending that it is a statement about "me." "I am a person-who-intends-to-do-such-and-such-a-thing." The thought has that aspect, indeed, but it is not a prominent one.

Formal logic, accordingly, does not deal with that commonest type of inference, "I wish to do a certain thing, so I must do this other thing first," because this inference does not make the kind of pattern required of a syllogistic argument, or any pattern which lends itself to manipulation.

The chief use of the rules of the syllogism, perhaps, is that they lead people to formulate their arguments, and so compel them to notice whether what they are stating applies to *all*, or only to *some* of the things in question. "The universal" is no less, but rather more, important and far-reaching in its implications to us than it was to Plato. If we really mean *all*, then we are stating an essential, and not a merely accidental, connection between things, and one which calls for explanation and thought. A study of formal logic

forces us to think about the exact meaning of what we say, and to try to make clear and complete the grounds on which we base our conclusions. This often puts us on the track of unconscious premisses, and so leads to a firmer conviction of truth or a correction of error.

Let us take a few arguments, unsound but popular, to criticise solely by the rules of formal logic.

(1) The argument against raising wages. "If wages in a trade are raised, the price of the article made is raised, the number sold is lessened, therefore the number of men employed has to be lessened and more men are out of work." Or "if the wages are raised the employers who can only just 'carry on' at present will have to give up manufacturing, and discharge their 'hands.'"

Formal logic requires us to put this argument into shape. We are compelled to ask ourselves, do we mean that the price of the article made always and necessarily goes up whenever there is a rise in wages; and do we mean that the number of men in a trade is always and necessarily diminished? We find that we certainly do not mean that, because for many years, up to 1900 at least, the general tendency was for wages to rise and prices to fall simultaneously, while in certain trades, such as the printing trade, the tendency in both directions was marked—wages rose at times in a startling manner, while books and newspapers became very much cheaper and the number of men employed in the trade increased.<sup>22</sup>

(2) So with the stock argument against protected wheat. "When we had Protection the people starved." Yes, but was that because of a universal and necessary connection between a duty on imported wheat and a dear loaf, or only because of an accidental one? We are driven to get a clearer idea of what the connection actually is.

When we formulate arguments, in the syllogistic

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fashion, we find that a large number of logical errors are traceable to a confusion between "some" and "all." It is the commonest mistake possible to argue from "some things" to "this thing"; and if once we grasp the fact that we can only correctly draw an inference about a single thing by passing through the *universal*, we have taken, with Aristotle, a long step on the road to right reasoning. It does not follow because many capitalists are selfish, that all are; that because some plays are indecent, none are worth going to; that because some forms of tubercular disease are infectious, this one is.

It is easy to see the fallacy when put so plainly, but let us examine a few current instances where it is better concealed.

(1) All cheap blouses are made by sweated labour, therefore I am safe not to encourage sweating if I pay a good price. (But all cheap blouses, and some dear ones too, might be made by sweated labour.)

(2) None of the soaps that are much advertised is any good, but this soap isn't advertised at all, therefore I may rely on it. (But some soaps which are not advertised may be "no good" either.)

(3) The inhabitants of this town, with its impure water supply, have been healthy and long-lived, therefore we desire no improvement. (But bad water may be harmless to some and not to all. It may yet cause death and disease.)

(4) These men were religious men, and they won the war for us, so that we can never say that religion did not save our country. Or these men were notorious atheists, and yet they won the war for us, so it looks as if we could do better without too much religion. (In both cases the religion or irreligion of the men in question may have had nothing to do with their winning the war, *i. e.* there may be no true universal here at all.)

(5) They tell you that some rich men are convinced social reformers. All I know is, that it's the people

who feel where the shoe pinches that want to get it altered. What do those rich folk know of labour questions? (But poor people, and rich as well, might be convinced social reformers, though from different causes.)

The laws of formal logic are the most widely embracing of any natural laws, since they apply to every conceivable object of thought from Infinity to a toadstool.

Some people find it a fascinating puzzle to see what is, and what is not, necessarily implied in any statement or combination of statements. The formal implications of any combination of statements are most clearly set out by means of "*Euler's diagrams*" of circles. Thus "all As are Bs" is expressed diagrammatically by a smaller circle A enclosed within a larger B, with an alternative of two coinciding circles A and B. You may fill in your As and Bs as you please, it will always be true that if all As are B, and some are C, then some Cs are also B. It will never necessarily follow, because all As are B, and none are C, that there are any Cs which are not B. To people with a taste for it the calculations of syllogistic logic have a fascination like that of arithmetic, and as a mental training for the young they are perhaps as useful; but it cannot be pretended that serious mistakes are made in the conduct of life merely through errors in formal logic.

Such errors have causes below the surface whither the modern logician directs his search.

We may compare the reasoning mind with a coining machine which produces good coin and bad. It is the business of formal logic to test and classify the coins produced, returning faulty ones to be re-minted. Its value is permanent, but its function is remote from the logical interest of the day, which is with the problems offered by the machine itself. Why does it sometimes turn out faulty coins, and can the defect be remedied? This question is so pressing that we have little attention for others. In Aristotle's time the fact that every one

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universalises was a new and exciting discovery, and he hastened to make use of it in his search for the laws of thought, with the result that he invented the syllogism. In our own day the fact that mind evolves is a new and exciting discovery, and we are on the road to fresh formulations of the laws of thought when we know them to be the laws of a thought which is progressively developing.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup> Rev. R. F. Clarke, *Logic*, 4th ed., 1897, p. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> See *St. Thomas D'Aquin*, by A.-D. Sertillanges, Paris, 1910, Tome I. pp. 17-20. See also H. O. Taylor, *Medieval Mind*, 1911, II. 437 and 477. The independence of St. Thomas's thought is seen in his attitude towards asceticism, which was the prevalent ideal. He taught "The caritas with which we love God extends to our neighbours, and even to our enemies for God's sake; also to ourselves, including our own bodies."

<sup>3</sup> W. S. Jevons, *Elementary Lessons in Logic*, Lesson xx.

<sup>4</sup> The words which express the idea of evolution, such as advance, amelioration, development, improvement, progress, "can none of them be found in English with their present meaning before the sixteenth century." L. Pearsall Smith, *The English Language*, Home University Library, 1912, p. 224.

<sup>5</sup> Anaximander, about 570 B.C. See C. M. Bakewell, *Source-Book in Ancient Philosophy*, 1907, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33, about 505 B.C.

<sup>7</sup> In a pamphlet published under a pseudonym alluded to in *A Discovery of a New World*, 1684, p. 160. See Harleian Miscellany, ed. Park, 1811, VIII., 345.

<sup>8</sup> See Bakewell, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>9</sup> *Hist. Animal*, Bk. I., section viii.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. II., section xv.

<sup>11</sup> See *Outlines of the Philosophy of Aristotle*, Edwin Wallace, 3rd ed., p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> *The Story of My Life*, by Helen Koller, 1903, p. 316.

<sup>13</sup> *The World I Live In*, by Helen Keller, 1908, p. 199.

<sup>14</sup> O. Jespersen, *Progress in Language*, trans. 1894, p. 350.

<sup>15</sup> Aristotle, *Met.*, VI. 16, 1040.

<sup>16</sup> See H. O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind*, 1911, I. 35-37.

<sup>17</sup> See *ibid.* throughout, e. g. I. chap. III.

<sup>18</sup> E. g. Egyptians still teach history showing that European civilisation is an offspring of the original Arab. Cf. the legend of the Lost Tribes.

<sup>19</sup> Henry Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, 1909, p. 259.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. *Richard II.* II. 1, 124. Cf. *Mirror for Magistrates*, II. 132, ed. Haslewood, 1815. For Pelican see Sir Thos. Browne, *Enquiries into Vulgar Errors*, 1650, Bk. V. chap. i.

<sup>21</sup> We may substitute colourless symbols for phrases, and we get—

	Some Ms are Ps		M	i	P
	(All) S is an M	or	S	a	M
	∴ S is a P	∴	S	a	P
And	No Ms are Ps	or	M	e	P
	Some Ss are Ms		S	i	M
	∴ No Ss are Ps	∴	S	e	P

The technical stock-in-trade of syllogism is set out here.

M is the *Middle Term* linking together S and P in the *Syllogism* or formula. A, e, i, and o represent respectively—

a, the universal affirmative judgment	"all are"
e, the universal negative judgment	"none are"
i, the particular affirmative judgment	"some are"
o, the particular negative judgment	"some are not"

<sup>22</sup> See A. L. Bowley, *Wages in the United Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century*, 1900. "Money wages in the nineties were 10 per cent. above those of the eighties and 30 per cent. above those of the sixties" (p. 126). Or see *Riches and Poverty*, L. G. Chiozza Money, ed. 1911, diagram, p. 113.



**PART I**

**THE UNCONSCIOUS BACKGROUND TO  
CONSCIOUS REASONING**





## CHAPTER II

### INSTINCT

The very essence of an instinct is that it is followed independently of reason.—CHARLES DARWIN.

IN the last chapter we compared the mind to a machine turning out good coins and bad. The business of formal logic, we said, was to test and classify the coins, while the modern logician was more concerned with the causes that every now and then produce faulty ones.

In this chapter and the next we shall try to get an insight into the working of the machine, and see how reasoning fits in with certain other functions of mind, which are so intimately connected with it that a clear idea of their nature is essential in order to understand that of reason itself.

The first of these is instinct, that function which reason modifies but does not supersede.

We may observe it in striking forms in the insect world—a field long famous for its study; and thither let us follow M. Fabre.

In one of his fascinating books M. Fabre tells how the praying mantis makes a nest for her eggs, which are required to stand the winter.<sup>1</sup> She ejects from her body a liquid substance, not unlike white of egg, which quickly solidifies. This she beats into a foam, depositing her eggs in it meanwhile, and using certain ladle-like valves at the end of her abdomen, much as a cook uses a whisk, to imprison bubbles of air<sup>2</sup> in surrounding

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froth. What she has made is a frost-resisting material of an up-to-date and scientific pattern; for it has been lately discovered that the best possible non-conductor of heat is just such a "blanket of air-cells."

This performance of the mantis is undoubtedly instinctive. Can it in any sense be regarded as rational, reasonable, logical (for we shall use the three terms as synonymous)?

To an onlooker possessed of reason her action appears rational, but viewed by one who in imagination stands at the point of view of the mantis herself it does not.

To the onlooker it is rational in this sense: that if he knows what purpose the nest is to serve, and knows the frost-resisting properties of encased air-bubbles, he can see a reason in all the insect does, can see that her means are admirably adapted to attain their ends.<sup>2</sup>

It is non-rational in this sense: that it is all done, not exactly mechanically, but without the insect knowing what she does, nor why she does it, any more than we know that our gall-bladders are squeezing out bile, or our bone-cells are repairing bone.<sup>3</sup>

Human beings, as well as insects, have instincts, and in so far as they act on instinct they act non-rationally like the mantis. Perhaps only the separate behaviour of our bodily organs, or of individual cells, or groups of cells, composing our bodies, is as completely automatic as the behaviour of insects, and this has never come within the sphere of central self-consciousness.<sup>4</sup> All the details, even of our purposive actions, are instinctive and automatic: "We merely will the action as a whole," it has been said, "and the muscles do the rest,"<sup>5</sup> the movements of these muscles appearing rational to a reflective onlooker.

But some of our habitual actions which engage the whole self would also seem to be fundamentally automatic. Take, for instance, the way a little child hides from a stranger, or a grown man protects his head and dodges a missile.

Other actions have in them a large admixture of primitive instinct. "I'll just show the children how to use these bricks," says their father, or "this toy pistol." Let us suppose that he has not built since childhood, and does not shoot, but that the bricks fascinate him so that he cannot stop building, or that he feels he simply must go on discharging the pistol till he has hit the mark. In such a case he goes on because of an instinct for workmanship or construction, or for hitting a mark. His building with toy bricks is pursued almost like an appetite; it is akin to the ants' nest-building; and when he shoots perseveringly with the pistol, until he gets a bull's-eye, he acts much as does a kitten chasing a ball. Suppose his intention were to amuse himself with play-building or with play-shooting, then his action might be perfectly rational, but we are assuming that his purpose is to instruct his children in the use of the toys. The man, in this case, does not, in fact, pursue his conscious, reflective aim, but pursues an instinctive unconscious one, while the ant and the cat have no conscious reflective aims at all. In all three cases the action is non-rational or non-logical, being outside reason, performed without reference to a conscious purpose.

Actions thus performed, automatically or merely upon instinct, may be said to be non-rational as regards their intention, but rational or irrational as regards their effect. Viewed by an onlooker who understands their purpose, they can be criticised for their reasonableness, but the actor himself is unaware of this purpose. Instinctive actions can be irrational in effect, as well as rational, as a further illustration from M. Fabre will serve to show.

He tells elsewhere of a spider who has laid some eggs. By a laborious operation she has made a case for them, woven, elaborated, folded and completed, so that the whole forms a "white silk pill, soft to the touch and glutinous." This is taken from her. She is

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now introduced to a little bit of cork, whereupon she rushes at it, embraces it, fondles it, fastens it to her spinnerets, and "thenceforth," says M. Fabre, "drags it after her as though she were dragging her own bag of eggs; never leaving it day or night, and defending it with a courage that strikes the beholder with awe." <sup>6</sup>

To the onlooker her conduct on this occasion is irrational, because it achieves no aim. It is based on a false assumption, namely, that the hard, dry bit of cork is a satin-like purse, enclosing a precious burden of embryonic spiders. Grant the mother-spider's premiss, however—that this is her egg-ball—and her actions appear logical. We happen to know that the thing which she treats as though it were alive and hatchable, is really lifeless and irrelevant, and consequently we judge her conduct to be illogical. So far as conscious purpose is concerned, she has none, and her action is altogether outside reason, or non-rational; judged by an outsider who knows its biological aim it appears irrational, because it does not achieve this aim, which is to preserve the species.

This last example shows plainly where lies the weakness of instinct compared with rational conduct. The ant and the bee do things which seem to us to show far more wonderful and highly complex intelligence than is ever displayed by particularly dull-witted human beings. But this only appears to be the case because we do not compare their corresponding actions. We take an example of instinct at its highest degree of perfection, and compare it with one of reason at its lowest. But instinct has inherent defects which put it on an altogether lower level. For example, the insect is entirely baffled by any obstacle, any change in external conditions, against which it is not provided by Nature with a regular way of acting in accordance with an inherited quasi-mechanical bodily structure. This defect is shown in the following case.

M. Fabre disturbed a mother-spider at the moment

of laying her eggs, so that instead of dropping them into a capsule she dropped them on the ground. What did she do under these circumstances? She did not go after them and rescue them. She proceeded to weave round the empty capsule an elaborate bag of silk which should have protected the eggs, and she made it "as accurate in shape, as finished in structure as under normal conditions." <sup>7</sup>

At another time he removed a wasp's nest which was just about to be completed. The wasp thereupon gave the finishing touches to "the place on the wall whence the nest had been removed."

"You speak to me," says M. Fabre, addressing such an insect, "of a strange psychology which is able to reconcile the wonders of a master craftsmanship with aberrations due to unfathomable stupidity." <sup>8</sup>

The stupidity of the dullest human being is in its nature fathomable. He has a reason for the stupid things he does, one which is capable, at any rate, of being made conscious, so that he might conceivably see and correct his errors. When we compare the minds of human beings with those of the lower animals, we should pit reason against reason, instinct against instinct. Then we should realise that a woman surpasses the highest achievements of the insects when she makes a child in her body, or when she changes meat and drink into her own form and features, inasmuch as a human being is structurally more wonderful and complicated than an insect. Into these bodily activities reason does not enter as a means, any more than into the spider's weaving of an egg-case, but it can be imposed upon them externally by way of explanation. The embryologist, chemico-physiologist and histologist can explain how the human mother's means are adapted to their ends just as we explain those of the mantis. Each prepares for the security, nourishment and birth of its young automatically. An urge or rudimentary craving, it may be, in each case sets the train of action going at

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the stimulus of an interesting object, but once started the action proceeds of itself, whether visibly or not to the eye of a spectator. Thus to make the baby's thigh-bones, we are told that in the seventh week of foetal life the mother begins to set millions of "wee free cells" to work, "weaving sheets of fine fibres, and then plastering the fibres with carbonate and phosphate of lime so as to form thin curved plates of bone." "Between the plates are thousands of little spindle-celled spaces, and in each of these one of the bone-building cells makes a home for itself"—a home where it can get food and stretch out to touch its neighbours.<sup>9</sup>

Unaided instinct is marvellous indeed, but those animals whose instinct is aided by reason create and destroy with more effect. Insects as well as men fight each other for the possession of the world, but men come nearer to possessing it.

There are no two opinions amongst students of mind as to the fundamental nature of instinct. It is held to be entirely non-rational, quasi-mechanical; but what is doubtful is whether instinct is ever to be met with pure, even in the insect world. Some observers think they detect an element from the first which is not mechanical, not purely instinctive, an element which leads to the modification of instinctive reactions, and enables the creature to learn by experience.

This element, says Prof. Hobhouse, is perception, and perception is the germ of reasoning.<sup>10</sup> For an illustration let us turn again to M. Fabre. He describes an attempt to deceive a spider into thinking it had caught a fly. He says, "I make a small bundle out of red wool. . . . I glue it to the web. My stratagem succeeds. . . . The moment it trembles, stirred by my straw, she (the spider) runs up eagerly." But notice how differently different spiders behave. "There are silly ones," he says, "who just touch the thing with their legs, and, without further enquiries, swathe it in silk after the manner of the usual game. They even go

so far as to dig their fangs into the bait, following the rule of the preliminary poisoning. Then, and then only, the mistake is recognised and the tricked spider retires and does not come back, unless it be long afterwards, when she flings the lumbering object out of the web." She has learnt by experience that it is not succulent. "There are also clever ones" who, "soon perceiving that the thing is valueless, are careful not to spend their silk on useless bonds. My quivering bait . . . is flung out after a brief inspection." <sup>11</sup>

Here, possibly, we have the germ of reason, a something beyond instinct, interpenetrating it, variously named "perception" or "intelligence." But whether or no in the spider's case there is a true display of intelligence, there is no difference of opinion as to its fundamental difference from instinct, whenever it does appear, nor any doubt as to which is which in well-marked cases. The spider who spins a web obeys instinct; the rook who breaks a mussel-shell acts intelligently; the man who improves a machine follows reason. <sup>12</sup>

If the spider's action be truly intelligent we suppose him to profit by experience in a way which implies the germ of an idea. It is possible that there is no intelligence involved, but that he acts mechanically, changing his course of action in response to chemical and physical changes in his own organism and in surrounding objects, as inevitably as a bit of iron expands with heat or rusts in water.

One reason which makes us chary of assuming intelligence is the difficulty of attributing it to any creature without a brain. Even the most rudimentary animals, without any vestige of a brain whatever, behave in a way which seems to indicate a capacity for choice and a power of profiting by experience. Thus Prof. Jennings watched and recorded a contest between two amoebæ where both these characteristics were displayed. <sup>13</sup> A wounded amoeba pursued by a sound



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one was captured, escaped, was recaptured and finally escaped, the whole incident occupying fifteen minutes. Nor were the combatants extraordinary or exceptional amoebæ, for we are told of Protozoa in general (the group to which they belong) that their movements appear to be not all of them purely quasi-mechanical. "In the same culture different individuals exhibit different powers of resistance to the effect of reagents," as when alcohol is put into their water; while amoebæ proper "exercise a certain choice or selection in the food they ingest."<sup>14</sup>

Wherever it may begin—this non-instinctive element in behaviour—it increases as we rise in the animal scale, and possibly accounts for that individual variety amongst animals which has been shown by the naturalist with the camera to be so much greater than was thought.

"You can never say with certainty," says Mr. Kearton, "that the conduct of the individual wild creature—whether bird or beast—will be exactly that of the species to which it belongs. Mind, disposition and circumstance all play their part in the doings of Nature's children to a far greater extent than is generally supposed."<sup>15</sup> We are introduced to an altruistic robin—a robin in a thousand, very likely—who fed little thrushes, while Mr. Kearton took their photographs.<sup>16</sup> The same naturalist made the experiment of removing the nests of birds to a short distance. The birds varied in the way they behaved. In most cases they took the situation calmly as soon as they found the nest, and settled down as readily in their new surroundings as those English villagers whose homes, which clustered round the church, were transplanted to the roadside by the squire.<sup>17</sup> But there was an exception. A certain ring-ouzel hen,—the cock was in no way original—highly resented the interference. When she found the nest which had been tampered with, she began to pull it to pieces, in violent anger, and refused to resume

her maternal duties till it was restored to the site of her choice.<sup>18</sup>

Intelligence, then, or the germ of reason, is suspected nowadays even in the amoeba; traces of it would seem to some to be observable in the spider, while, perhaps, most scientists would credit it to the bird. But it is not till we come to the higher apes, the dog and the elephant—if then—that we find it developed into reason, and not until we come to man do we find reason paramount and explicit.

In man reason suffuses instinct, but does not supplant it. He would seem to leave those actions only to the province of automatism or of instinct pure which are found to be most usefully so left, and he is constantly discovering which they may be, delegating some actions to unconsciousness which have been deliberately acquired, and educating others into consciousness which have been performed instinctively. It is recognised, for instance, as Prof. Hobhouse says, that to fall in love for the first time is a purely instinctive action.<sup>19</sup> One of the current problems of Eugenics is, accordingly, how far is love at first sight a good reason for marrying; whether the instinct in question should take its course, or be controlled and supplemented from the higher motives belonging to the domain of reason.

But the higher motives themselves are instinctive in their nature, though new arrivals on the stage of mind. All human activities, including self-controlled thought or action, are impelled and kept going by motive force of a quasi-mechanical nature, as much beyond the owner's power of forcing as is the impulse which sets the spider weaving her egg-bag. Without some instinctive impulse to prompt him, a man cannot act at all, even negatively. Reason does not supply a motive to action, it does not set us going, though each and every motive which actuates us sets reason going. The initial energy remains in the province of instinct and impulse.

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In animals a stimulus causes an immediate reaction, and this becomes part of a sequence of reactions, a series of reflex movements which constitutes an instinct. In Man, instincts themselves become parts of larger schemes of instincts, regulated by higher co-ordinating impulses. Instinct joins the separate links into a chain; instinct weaves the separate chains into a system.

Desire to reason constitutes one initial impulse, just as does desire for music or desire for food. We may find it acting alone or in co-operation with other impulses. Just as the spider kills the fly because she likes raw fly, and covers her eggs because she has a feeling for them; so a man orders his dinner because he likes beef-steak, and spends his money on his children because he has a feeling for them. So too the philosopher writes on metaphysics because he likes metaphysics, and the statesman brings in an Act to educate children because he has a feeling for them.

In one respect man's instincts proper are inferior to the insects'. Reasoned and purposive action has been found so much more useful that he has lost the capacity for long sequences of purely reflex action: and some instincts that he used to have he has lost, or is losing, altogether. It has been suggested that telepathy is the survival of an instinctive mode of communication, prior to speech, one which was left behind when speech developed, and so never came within the province of rational purpose. The explanation is plausible, and might conceivably cover other unusual faculties exhibited by "sensitives" or mediums, such as the thrusting out of amoeba-like arms to lift tables, the giving off of luminous emanations into the air, and other physical phenomena which would seem to belong to lowly forms of mind, which shun the light and lack the element of beauty.<sup>20</sup> It may be that there was a time in the course of man's million years or so of development<sup>21</sup> when these faculties were useful, and that they linger on here and there as anachronisms.

They would seem never to have been brought under the control of the will, but to remain in the region of the unconscious.

We have noticed one respect in which man's instincts are superior to those of the animals. As Prof. James pointed out, he has a far greater number of them,<sup>22</sup> or perhaps he has developed a number of branches. Not only has he desires and purposes connected with his food, his offspring, his mate, and his kind, but he has desires and purposes connected with the good, the beautiful, and the true as such; impulses of hatred, not only towards his enemy and his rival, but towards that which is ugly, evil and false as such. The power of valuation or capacity for feeling the intrinsic value of things in regard to certain of their qualities, and of general principles of action, accompanies an impulsive love of love and hatred of hatred. One leading interest or instinctive energy of man which, so far as we know, is quite unshared by the animals is his love of truth for truth's sake, the desire to act in accordance with the plan of things-as-they-really-are, and to know more about it. This instinct impels to the pursuit of logic.

Having made clear the broad distinction between instinct and reason, we will now look for a more precise meaning to attach to reason as such.

We saw that the insect's instinctive reactions were performed automatically, but that to an onlooker possessed of reason they appeared to be related to each other as means for attaining a certain biologically useful end. Here, then, we find the distinctive character of reason: it is a grasp of the connection between parts within a whole of a specific kind, the seeing of things as bearing upon each other within a distinctive plan or scheme. Not all connecting schemes are rational, and we may get a clearer notion of the meaning we have in view, if we first consider the case of a scheme relating parts within a whole, where the connection is of another sort than the rational. \*

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People who frequent cinemas are familiar with a film which shows a number of stars jumbled up together. Gradually these stars fall into position and compose some pattern. They are now grasped as parts related to each other within a whole. Here a jumbled mass has changed into an ordered pattern, but we can imagine a case, which may illustrate our point better, in which the pattern was there all the time, though at first it escaped notice.

Or we may think of ourselves as making the pattern, selecting some stars, and rejecting others, for the purpose. Or we may conceive ourselves as actually making the stars, which form a pattern as they are made. In each case, objects of thought, (*viz.* stars), are discovered or created, which constitute parts within a whole, so that they are only understood when they are grasped in their relation to each other within this whole or scheme.

Now there are at least three distinct kinds of schemes which are all of them essentially "rational": (1) that in which things are seen as means designed to attain a certain end; (2) that in which they are related to each other as causes tending to produce a certain effect; and lastly (3) that in which they are viewed as grounds from which is inferred a certain conclusion.

In each case the scheme constitutes the "form," its components make up the "content." In the first two cases time is an essential factor to the relation as we see it; in the last it is not. Of course we ourselves cannot get outside of time to see the connection of grounds and conclusion, but the notion of time does not appear to us essential to the connection when discovered.

In all three cases the connection is what we call a rational connection, and reason enables us to discover it.

To turn to examples illustrating the three rational schemes.

(1) Things are seen in relation to each other as various means producing a given end. The spider's

eggs which were mislaid by the spider may supply an illustration.<sup>23</sup> Let us suppose that the housewife picks them up and wishes to hatch them, without the help of either M. Fabre or the mother spider. She has a spider's-egg plan or scheme, and she entertains ideas which occur to her, and regards objects which she sees, as forming parts of this spider-hatching scheme. Her first idea—remembering the mantis—is “whipped white of egg”; but she reflects that it will go bad; even if cooked it will not keep indefinitely. Besides, the young insects must have a passage by which to emerge. The idea of white of egg does not fit into the scheme, consequently she rejects it. The next plan that occurs to her is to place the eggs in cotton-wool, and put them in a safe place on the top of a cupboard, where there is warmth from the hot-water pipes, and where they will be safe from the cat and the duster. The cotton-wool, the cupboard, the pipes, the cat and duster, are all thought of as parts within a whole, as items in a plan for hatching the spider's eggs. This is as far as her reason takes her, with shadowy notions of watching the eggs. The trained reason of the scientist would conceive a better scheme, and fill in more details.

It takes time to hatch eggs, and the spider's egg-scheme exhibits a sequence in time involving purpose, *i. e.* it is most naturally viewed as means designed to produce an end.

(2) By omitting the notion of purpose, however, it could be regarded, from another point of view, as a scheme of causes-producing-an-effect, the warmth, protection, and so forth, producing the effect of hatching.

(3) Our next example of parts inter-related within a whole may be viewed as a scheme of grounds and conclusion. I hear that a new provision shop has opened in the Walkington Road. I immediately conclude that it will fail. In making this conclusion, I find (when I come to reflect) that I am influenced by a number of considerations, all of which lead me to it.

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They are related to one another in that they all lead to the same inference, fortifying each other—are all parts within a shop-that-is-likely-to-fail scheme. During the ten years that I have lived in the neighbourhood a succession of shops have opened in that road and failed. A large emporium round the corner supplies the needs of all who can pay cash down, and the custom of those who buy “on tick” brings too many bad debts to be profitable. The shop, I think, has a bare chance of success only if it deals in some attractive “speciality.”

Our final example is one either of means to an end, or of ground and conclusion, or of cause and effect, according to the standpoint from which it is viewed.

The under-gardener was puzzled to think what his mistress, the squire's wife, was driving at. For ten years she had taken no particular interest in him or his. He had tried in vain to get repairs done to his cottage, had been refused a rise in wages, and had not liked to ask for a holiday. About a year ago things changed. His cottage was done up, his wages raised to the Trade Union rate. He had a week's holiday in the summer, and his children were taken notice of. To-day he hears that the young squire is going to stand for Parliament in these parts. Now he sees her puzzling acts as parts of a whole, as part of her plan for getting her son made a Member of Parliament. Her purpose gives a unity to otherwise incoherent actions.

Reason, then, is the faculty for grasping a certain kind of unity amongst phenomena—for seeing certain relations between things which actually exist. It will be shown later that the simplest act of perception implies a reference to schemes; for the sensory data are referred back, by way of reminiscence, to objects experienced in the past as belonging to schemes, and referred forward to some object in the present which also is part of a scheme of objects.<sup>24</sup>

## NOTES TO CHAPTER II

- <sup>1</sup> *Social Life in the Insect World*, 1912, pp. 91 and 95.
- <sup>2</sup> Cf. L. T. Hobhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, 1901, pp. 29-30.
- <sup>3</sup> Cf. *The Romance of the Human Body*, Ronald Campbell Macfie, 1917, pp. 56-7.
- <sup>4</sup> "It can easily be shown that conditions are the same in higher and lower animals. We must only be careful to homologise a lower form with a single organ or segment of a higher animal." Professor Jacques Loeb, *Comparative Physiology of the Brain and Comparative Psychology*, 1901, p. 39.
- <sup>5</sup> *The Romance of the Human Body*, op. cit., p. 67.
- <sup>6</sup> *The Life of the Spider*, trans. 1912, pp. 77, 81, and 83.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64. See also *The Study of Animal Life*, J. A. Thomson, 1917. "Each of the modes" (i. e. intelligent and instinctive behaviour) "has its particular excellences and limitations, and though they are, to our thinking, on different lines of evolution, they are often found in co-operation," p. 167.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Romance of the Human Body*, pp. 54-55.
- <sup>10</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, chap. iv.
- <sup>11</sup> *The Wonders of Instinct*, 1918, p. 199. Prof. Lloyd Morgan in his books lays stress on the modification of instinct by experience. See also W. McDougall, *Body and Mind*, 1911, chap. xix, and J. A. Thomson, *The Study of Animal Life*, 1917, pp. 165 seq., and L. T. Hobhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, chap. iv.
- <sup>12</sup> J. A. Thomson, op. cit., p. 167.
- <sup>13</sup> H. S. Jennings, *Behaviour of the Lower Organisms*, 1906, pp. 16, 18 and 337. "Amœba," says Prof. Jennings, "is a beast of prey and gives the impression of being controlled by the same elemental impulses as higher beasts of prey."
- <sup>14</sup> E. A. Minchin, *Introduction to the Study of the Protozoa*, 1912, p. 204.
- <sup>15</sup> *Wild Nature's Ways*, R. Kearton, 1903, p. 53.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.
- <sup>17</sup> A village in Wiltshire on the road between Salisbury and Downton.
- <sup>18</sup> R. Kearton, op. cit., pp. 57, etc.
- <sup>19</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, op. cit., p. 50.
- <sup>20</sup> See J. Maxwell, *Metaphysical Phenomena* (trans.), 1905, pp. 24-6.
- <sup>21</sup> See *The Antiquity of Man*, Arthur Keith, 1915, frontispiece.
- <sup>22</sup> W. James, *Principles of Psychology*, 1890, II. 441
- <sup>23</sup> See *supra*, pp. 24-5.
- <sup>24</sup> See *subter*, p. 85.



## CHAPTER III

### INTUITION

All men, except fools, have their irrational sides. Who does not believe what his reason shall labour in vain to justify? Such belief may have its roots spread through generalisations broader than any specific rational processes of which the man is conscious.  
—H. O. TAYLOR

IN the last chapter we tried to gain some notion of the distinctive characters of instinct and of reason. The difference between them may be shortly recapitulated from a fresh point of view, in order to introduce that other function of mind with which we now have to deal—the intuitive.

Suppose an animal to be acting in obedience to instinct: if the “stream of consciousness” of its mind could be arrested and examined at any moment, it would be found to be in some rudimentary form a thinking, feeling, acting mind, with its action directed toward some end. The animal can be regarded as making a mistake, which would be impossible were its actions viewed as non-rational, or outside the scope of reason, for then they would seem to aim at nothing, and no effect could come amiss. But the movements, or “reactions” as they are called, of the simplest animal are seen to aim at life and the reproduction of the species. Such a purpose, however, may be only in the mind of the spectator, and not at all in the mind of the animal itself, which may act like a machine, unconscious of what it is doing, and behaving in all

points exactly as it is compelled to behave by its construction and circumstances. The apparent reasonableness of its behaviour is no evidence that it possesses reason. There does exist, however, some evidence of another kind, that reason is there in embryo, and any animal may be regarded as displaying the rudiments of reason just in so far as it modifies a train of reactions,—alters the routine of instinct—the better to achieve its immediate purpose. At what stage in the ascent of animal life this is done, remains an unsettled question. Some good observers credit intelligence to the spider, others deny it to the dog, interpreting his behaviour as purely quasi-mechanical. However that may be, when we come to man as known to ourselves, we find that “reason rules all.” For man is a rational animal whose acts of consciousness are characteristically (though not exclusively) rational acts. Their rationality may be of a more, or less, highly developed order. Most acts of a man’s mind are, perhaps, neither purely instinctive nor thoroughly rational. They belong to a region between the two where intelligence is passing into reason—the realm of intuition.

Accepting the ordinary meaning of the word, let us see what is involved in it. When we “act on intuition” we have a reason for what we do, which we should recognise were it set out clearly before us, but as things are we remain unconscious of it. If we try to give our reason, it is ten to one that we give it wrong, and say, not what is true, but what we are able to express, our actual reasons not being sufficiently conscious to permit of expression. With experience and practice, they can sometimes be discovered, made explicit where before they were implicit, rational where before they were pre-rational. Implicit reasoning is common, and we may here enquire how it differs from instinct, and how it is related to fully conscious, or explicit reasoning.

To take an example from everyday life. Some amateur cooks, who are intelligent people and whose

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cooking is excellent, yet cannot tell you a single "recipe." They "go by eye," and have never measured quantities, nor reduced their method to a formula, nor consulted books. They do not regard their cookery as a science, but practise it intuitively, as an art. They cannot be said to act on instinct. There is no instinct prompting them to take such-and-such ingredients, in such-and-such quantities, and treat them in such-and-such a manner. When the cook in question walks, for example, she walks by instinct; and in so doing she contracts some muscles and relaxes others in obedience to the laws of balance and locomotion without any consciousness whatever of the rules she obeys.<sup>1</sup> But when she cooks she is not completely unconscious of what she is doing, or of her reasons for each step; she does not cook as she walks, or as the bird flies, but her movements obey or disobey the laws of reasoning applied to cookery, with a dim awareness of those laws in the background of her mind.

People of this intuitive type seem to the ultra-rational to be inspired, and they are often remarkably intelligent in the conduct of their affairs, but they cannot give reasons for what they do. Perhaps they are lacking in scientific curiosity, or in the power of abstract thought, or in that interest in other people which would prompt them to put their ideas into communicable form. Their reasoning remains undeveloped, below the threshold of consciousness. If their brains are set—no longer plastic—these intuitive people are apt to become confused, when required to turn their attention to the theory underlying their practice. Should the cook in question begin to think, her hand may be thrown out. It is well not to bother her with requests for recipes, but to be thankful that she cooks a good dinner. She does not possess a scientific, *i. e.* a logical, mind, and she cannot get one by trying.

Another intuitive cook perhaps does possess a scientific mind, but one that is untrained. Hitherto her rule

has been "to go by what you think," but she is ready, upon suggestion, to take an interest in the principles that underlie her actions; to find out the exact quantities of ingredients, the method of mixing, and so on, which produce the best results. Problems requiring thought and observation arise in the course of her cake-making: whether an hour's beating (as cooks of the old school used to maintain), or a dessertspoonful of baking-powder, makes the lighter sponge; what is the difference in result, if any, between rubbing the fat into the flour, and creaming the fat and sugar and then adding the dry ingredients.

Her intelligent interest might be damped, if she found herself listening to a disquisition on the chemistry of cooking, a study of the molecular changes resultant from friction and from heat. Her scientific curiosity, like that of most people, perhaps, is limited to the rules immediately underlying her practice, rules the knowledge of which will lead her to understand how a good cake is made, as well as how to make it. The rest is beyond her.

In both cases the cook's reasoning, to start with, is implicit. In the case of the first cook, she is not capable of making it explicit, and her cooking may suffer temporarily if she tries. It is not likely to suffer for long, because, her desire being to cook, she will soon fall back upon the old intuitive method, which works. If her companions continue to muddle her with their reasonable advice, emotion, and not logic, will spoil her cooking.

In the case of the second cook, when she begins to interest herself in methods, her implicit reasons are made explicit. This does not make her a less good cook in any way. It makes her a better cook in this way, that she is more reliable. You can depend upon her to repeat a particular cake as often as required, and she can now teach some one else how to make it. No one applies herself to learn the logic of cookery without

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a motive, and the usual motive for doing so is the desire to become a better cook.

This is, indeed, the motive which most often leads people to make their reasons clear to themselves. A man generally learns the theory of his art in order to improve himself in its practice, and in so doing he abandons intuition, and the rule of thumb (which is the rule embodying intuition), and adopts scientific methods. The widest of all arts is the art of living, and the pursuit of that art provides a spur to every one to supplement intuition with reason. Each man is born into a world of things-as-they-are; and he has to adapt himself, to act in accordance with the laws which underlie successful living, if he is to live happily, or even, in some cases, to live at all. In order to get the things he wants, he reasons, as best he can, from the cradle to the grave, all day long, and at night in his dreams. At the outset of life his reasoning is all implicit; later on much of it becomes explicit, but still more remains implicit, or intuitive, to the end.

The child's first cry and movement towards its mother's breast are probably instinctive and not rational at all. If reason be there it is only in the germ. When the instinctive cry of hunger changes into the cry-with-a-purpose, "to make Mother come," the baby's reasoning is implicit or intuitive; he cannot even vaguely formulate his hypothesis to himself: "If I ask loud and often I shall get some food" (or "If I refrain from asking," as the case may be). The reasoning of the grown man, on the other hand, is fully explicit, when he rings the bell to order dinner, or when he leaves his fireside thinking: "If we are to have anything to eat I must look for a job."

We see intuition continually superseded by more conscious reasoning, as the individual or racial mind develops. The intuitive Indian, who finds the trail, but cannot tell you how, becomes a Sherlock Holmes who knows the way from a hundred indications carefully noted.

But at this point some one may ask : " Is it really a good thing to try to do away with intuition ? Surely the wisest of mankind are also the most intuitive ! "

The question is based on a misapprehension. Intuition could only be done away with by destroying mind itself. It is a mode of consciousness inseparable from a certain stage of mental development, a less developed form of that which at a further stage becomes explicit reasoning. Those individuals who are said to " have no intuition " have as much as others, but trust it less. As a rule, the conclusions they reach intuitively, clash with those of their social circle, and therefore are repressed.

The greatest minds are at the same time the most logical, the most intuitive, and the most impulsive or instinctive. The more there is *to* a person, the more will there be of him at each of these levels. A mind such as Shakespeare's is constantly raising intuition to the higher level of conscious reasoning, just as it is constantly raising blind impulse to the higher level of deliberate purpose. The lower levels are not thereby drained, but are perpetually refilled.

Let us look more closely at the praise commonly bestowed on the intuitive mind ; for to describe a person as " intuitive," is a compliment to a woman's intellect, and at least not derogatory to a man's. Intuition, perhaps, is most noticeable in people of rich and varied natures, who are not, however, markedly logical. Very often a ready sympathy has habitually saved them the trouble of thinking. A " very intuitive " woman, or one who " knows things by intuition," conveys the idea of a woman who quickly takes in a situation, and knows, without being told, what people are feeling and planning. The quiver of an eyelid, the tightening of a muscle about the lips, will put such an one in possession of facts, more completely than would a lengthy explanation. She grasps these signs immediately, as parts in, a complicated

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scheme with subtle threads of interrelation. She is quick to respond to emotion, quick to read its expressions, quick to deduce conclusions from imperfectly realised premisses. None the less the premisses are there. The tightened lip-muscle, or the narrowed iris, speak to the intuitive woman, in exactly the same manner as the scowling or the smiling face speak to the baby, the one making him frightened, the other pleased. Could the baby's reason-in-the-germ be unfolded, it might stand as follows: "If I made a face like that, I should hit some one next minute; so this creature will hit me;" or, "When Mother smiles she gives me sweets; so this creature will give me sweets."

Where the owner of a face and voice is introduced to the owner of another face and voice, immediately the data is supplied to each for a hundred conclusions about the other. If we have merely seen a man full face, we know far more about him than if we have only seen his back.

"I do not like you, Dr. Fell.  
The reason why, I cannot tell;"

but the reason is there, in the unconscious mind, and capable in its nature of being made conscious and formulated. It is, indeed, safer, when possible, to formulate it, since the grounds on which intuitive conclusions are based are notoriously unreliable. Thus William Blake, whose gifts of intuition were remarkable through life, read one villain's face, but misread another's. As a boy he refused to be bound apprentice to a certain man because he did not like his looks, and eventually the man was hanged. In later life he was favourably impressed by the murderer Wainwright.<sup>2</sup> Probably the criminal desires of both these men showed in their faces, and Blake could read them in the prospective master, because they were such as to rouse an echo in his own bosom; but the calculated cruelty, the mean cupidity, of Wainwright were beyond his capacity to understand.

Their language of eye and lip was unknown to him and unimaginable.

The same uncertainty would seem to attach to the power of clairvoyants and fortune-tellers, whose methods undoubtedly include a heightened power of reasoning from implicit premisses. • And here we come upon the weak point of intuition compared with reasoning proper. Just as we saw instinct to be helpless before the unusual, so is intuition misleading when confronted with the unknown. The typical intuitive woman is inadequate when she meets with emotions or desires beyond her range of experience. If she is not open-minded and benevolent in addition, she is then apt to be dangerous.

Othello was “an intuitive,” and he saw in Desdemona a contempt for himself coupled with a guile which he could understand, but which did not happen to be there. He was unable to appreciate the quality of her love, because, unlike his own, it was completely trustful, untinged by caprice. He could not read it in her face and voice, but read instead his own unconscious self-contempt.

Lear was another “intuitive” who could gauge the depth of love in the generous hearts of Regan and Goneril. With the piercing eye of the clairvoyant he saw into Cordelia’s very soul, and exposed the foul morass of her ingratitude. The calm, clear pool of dutiful affection he could not see, for it was not reflected in his own turbulent and troubled heart.

People who act unquestioningly on intuition are liable to such mistakes as Othello’s and Lear’s. And yet we hear praise of intuition, as of a faculty surpassing reason, authoritative, miraculous, or even divine! We venture to think its devotees are often people who repress some impulse which would be more usefully employed in the guidance of their lives. Good impulse repressed gains access to consciousness in the form of “intuition.” Then it is hardly recognised by its owner as belonging to his rational personality; it seems



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wiser than he. Thus one man who is repressed in some direction or other may have a presentiment, a mysterious assurance, a queer feeling, that something is about to happen; but another, whose conscious and unconscious spheres of mind are more in harmony, will know of good reasons for anticipating the event. The merit of intuition never lies in its being intuitive rather than explicitly rational.

Instinct-pure, instinct informed by intelligence, intuition, reason; each is good of its kind, and all are related in a scale of increasing development, where the old is not dropped, but is supplemented by the new. To neglect development, or to repress pre-rational elements of mind, both are mistaken courses.

It is not always within a man's power to make explicit the grounds for his action, but where the matter is a weighty one he gains by the attempt; nor does reason lead him to overlook any feeling which, though obscure, is actual.

In one sense the rational is most rational where most highly developed, and one task of logic is to promote the development of thought, by making explicit, processes which have hitherto been implicit only, whether in the mind of the individual or of the group.

Increasing logicity, like other human achievements, is largely due to the stimulus of minds of genius such as Aristotle's. Men of genius, in whatever sphere they work, are constantly making explicit, ideas and feelings already implicit in the minds of their fellows. The popular half-fledged ideas, whether moral, æsthetic or intellectual, push forward to meet theirs. To take, for example, the teaching of Christ; it may be surmised that much of it remains implicit to this day, grasped half-consciously, a challenge to the minds that grasp it, demanding to be made explicit and seen in all its bearings.

We have now taken stock of certain features of that background of the mind from which reason emerges

full-grown,—a background of pre-rational instinct and sub-rational intuition. In the next chapter we shall examine it as it appears in dreams, when the foreground of waking consciousness is in abeyance. There we shall look for characteristics of unconscious thought, which habitually influence the conscious mind. They, too, belong to the sub-rational sphere of instinct and intuition, that racial inheritance in each man's mind which he shares with his more primitive ancestors, the groundwork of later developments, the background from which these stand out in relief.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Romance of the Human Body* (see *supra*), p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> A Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake*, 1863, I, pp. 13, 277.

## CHAPTER IV

### DREAMS AND UNCONSCIOUS SYMBOLISM

If, therefore . . . ye are intent upon wisdom,  
A lamp will not be wanting,  
And a shopherd will not fail,  
And a fountain will not dry up.—BARUCH.

WE have seen how, in the individual mind, reason emerges from a background of instinct and intuition, which reflects an earlier stage in the evolution of the race. Foreground and background, we maintained, are of one and the same stuff, more developed or less; and to understand either we must study both.

This background is what psycho-analysts call "the unconscious mind," in one of its aspects. We now propose to examine another aspect appearing in dreams, where the "unconscious" monopolises the field of consciousness.

Two preliminary words of explanation are needed. First if any readers are not convinced of the truth of psycho-analytic dream-interpretation, we would ask their indulgence for what may seem unwarrantable and even ludicrous assumptions. The position cannot be avoided, because, however imperfectly Freudian doctrines may be expressed, they seem, to their adherents, to embody truths so vital and so pertinent, that they cannot honestly be left out of an enquiry such as the present. Space will not admit of their statement and defence, so that a slight acquaintance

with them will be taken for granted at the risk of appearing dogmatic.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, we would deprecate the censure of any psycho-analysts to whom our position may seem offensively unorthodox, maintaining, as we do, that the rules of logic are not, as so often said, contradicted in the unconscious, or turned topsy-turvy, but merely applied to less developed material. The unconscious mind, it will be argued, has no peculiar logic of its own. All logic is one. that of rational mind continually developing.

The laws exhibited by a growing plant hold good for all its stages, but stated in terms of full-blown flowers their truth is not always obvious when applied to buds. In the unconscious mind, as in the bud, features are merged which later become separate. In dreams some mental traits are emphasised, which in consciousness escape notice; while others can barely be traced, which in consciousness are all-important; the mode of reasoning displayed is in some respects an undeveloped form of that of waking life.

Fallacy will be treated later, but for the sake of clearness we may here indicate the line which will be taken. Fallacy, it will be said, arises from a lack of co-ordination amongst mental processes belonging to different levels of development. When a man works his mind on its lower levels, and in certain directions reasons as he did when a child, or in a way which is outgrown by his race or generation, then he commits some logical fallacy or other.

Having now stated our position with regard to the relation between "logic" and "the logic of the unconscious mind," we will turn to dreams.

In dreams we find some modes of thought so archaic as to suggest that the dreamer's mind may be a million rather than a thousand years behind that of his waking self. Chief amongst these primitive features is *unconscious symbolism*, an activity of mind which,

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carried into waking thought, is at the root of all fallacy.

This sort of symbolism is shared alike by primitive, child, and dreamer. It is bound up so intimately with other primitive traits that any example illustrating it will illustrate the rest.

In dreams, then, thought is expressed symbolically, or dramatically, in images which are often visual, like the pictorial symbols used by early man, who made a concrete picture to convey an abstract thought. Thus Prof. Giles tells us that in the very early days of Chinese writing, a rude picture of "a child at the feet of an old man" expressed "filial piety," while one of "a woman and child" meant "good." A similar rudely-sketched group of a spear, a man in defensive attitude, and some sheep, meant "duty toward one's neighbour" through "the obligation to respect another man's flocks."<sup>2</sup> Just so, perhaps, does Blake's "Tyger burning bright, In the forests of the night," mean "strength"; the strength of the tiger, of a burning fire, and of a mighty forest: three images blended in one, as is the way of thought "in the night."

Imagery of this kind, whether in early Chinese script or present-day dream, belongs to a stage of mental development at which the idea is not separate in thought from the concrete experience, and can only be conceived or expressed in a particular concrete setting. We may detect the mind working at this same level, whenever a relation between things with which we are familiar fails to be recognised in an unfamiliar context. Thus a man of a somewhat primitive type of mind, who spoke three languages acquired by ear, could not translate "to the ends of the pencils" because the idea expressed by the words corresponded to no concrete experience, hence the words were without meaning.

Perhaps mental traits belonging to all the earlier levels of development are to be found in dreams. A

few only will be noticed which seem of special importance to our subject : (1) *the egocentricity of the dreamer ;* (2) *his failure to appreciate the difference between self and other objects, or to distinguish the separate and continuous individuality of things,* and (3) *his projection on to external objects of his own fantasies.*

These traits will be glanced at, first as they appear in dreams, and next in waking life, where they habitually colour thought and influence action.

(1) The egocentricity of the dreamer is not to be confounded with selfishness. Selfishness is a social crime—the deliberate preference of a man's own interests to those of other people; but the dreamer's egocentricity is neither a virtue nor a vice, any more than poetry or prose is in itself either moral or immoral. It is a poise of mind easier to experience than to describe. That self, which is sometimes all that a man possesses when he comes to die, in the dream is co-extensive with his universe. Other things seem part of it. This experience is prior to sympathy, which, accordingly, may sometimes be lacking in the dreams of normally sympathetic people. A tender-hearted woman, for example, dreamed that her dearest friend was cut to pieces on the floor. *What happens* in a dream is always *what the dreamer* in some measure *wishes to happen,* and this dream expressed a hostile feeling. People of kindly dispositions\* may not infrequently dream of themselves as callously inflicting pain; while no dream, perhaps, is better known than that of the illness, death, or funeral, of a member of the dreamer's family circle, a dream which is very often found to give the equivalent, at unconscious levels, of a passing flash of antipathy in the daytime.

Dreams are exclusively concerned with the self at mental levels below the conscious, hence they frequently express homely animal cravings, or crude diabolic passions, common to humanity, but allowed little scope in waking life by self-controlled people.

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(2) The self, which constitutes the dreamer's sole interest, is not clearly distinguished from other objects, nor is the permanent and separate individuality of things discerned. Thus in dreams it is not unusual for things to turn into each other, and to be each other, and to be the dreamer.

A mountain, a wolf, a bull, have been changed respectively in the course of a dream into a man, a woman, and a child, while each remained the dreamer's self. This phase of elusive and undifferentiated thought is admirably described by Wordsworth when recalling his childhood. He says, "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality." <sup>3</sup>

His mind was active at the same level of dream-consciousness, on another occasion in his boyhood, which he describes in "The Prelude." He had taken a boat which did not belong to him, and was rowing it on the lake, when suddenly a mountain, black and huge, upreared its head, and came striding after him, "as if with voluntary power instinct." <sup>4</sup>

(3) This mountain illustrates our next characteristic, for it was transformed into a policeman-mountain by the boy's projected fantasy. It was interesting to him, not on its own mountainous merits, but as giving symbolical expression to his sense of guilt.

When the pent-up emotion of the day finds vent at night, it is not always, as the poets would have us believe, in sweet communion with the very form of the beloved, for the dreamer seizes, as it were, upon the first thing that comes handy in the workshop of memory, and if it can in any way be made to serve his purpose, he heaps fantasy upon it, till it personify the object of his longing or fear.

Thus one dreamer made passionate love to something so little appropriate as a window-shutter. It seemed a being like himself, a living, feeling window-shutter; and he called it "Little Dorrit," for was it not a little door, and at the same time kindly, gentle and protective, like Dickens' heroine?

Another dreamer was married to a hazel-nut, which he took out of his waistcoat-pocket and gazed at fondly. No mercenary match this, such as the Indian girls' annual betrothal to their fishing-nets,<sup>5</sup> but a purely romantic union of souls.

Another turned into a tablecloth, to escape from someone who insisted that she should do pioneer work.

In each case the object dreamed of was a symbol expressing the dreamer's desires and emotions. Thus it was found, from associated ideas, that the window-shutter meant "letting in the sunshine and keeping out the bombs," *i. e.* light and safety; the hazel-nut stood for "simplicity" (through Lady Julian of Norwich<sup>6</sup> and William Blake<sup>7</sup>); while the table-cloth was an emblem of middle-class respectability—it came from those homes where not even for the purposes of honest work is the parlour table allowed to be undraped. In each case the dream-object was viewed by the dreamer as a symbol of that for which he longed; a symbol of light and safety; of simplicity; and, in the woman's case, of that kind of respectability which exonerates from effort.

We may find the counterparts of these particular symbols in waking life. An eager but timid soul, longing for light and safety, is disposed to see them within the four walls of any "tabernacle"; the worship of simplicity has led many a hapless lover to find it in a pretty face, whose owner was anything but simple; and how many women daily take refuge from alarming social duties behind gleaming door-knockers, well-looped window-curtains, the husband's dinner, and the conventional duties of a conscientious wife.



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Unconscious egocentricity, and fantasy projected—primitive, dream-like traits—explain, amongst other things, certain stock difficulties of married life. Each spouse regards the other as a part of the self;—a rib which shall be a helpmeet for man, who else were incomplete, or the powerful framework wherein a lonely rib may find support and meaning. This egocentric way a man has of looking at his wife, as a rib of his own, extends to other objects of his interest; and of course the converse is equally true of the opposite sex. If the longings, conscious and unconscious, of every pair of lovers dove-tailed as nicely as did those of Milton's Adam and Eve, there would be no such unhappy marriages as Milton's own.

“Ho, in delight  
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,  
Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter  
On Juno smiles.”<sup>8</sup>

And she addresses him thus—

“My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st  
Unargued I obey. So God ordains :  
God is thy law, thou mine : to know no more  
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.”<sup>9</sup>

The Adam-and-Eve type of mutual love occurs so often, amongst Teutonic races at any rate, that it was once taken for the normal, and they who departed from it, used to be regarded as amiss, and were likely to conceal their shortcoming even from themselves. But there have always been pairs of lovers who did not fit the pattern. Two climbing plants sometimes come together, each looking for a support, or two standards each needing a festoon of creeper for completion. Verlaine's case, as it appears to us, was typical.<sup>10</sup> The egocentric child in his being yearned for a mother's fond, indulgent love. He looked upon his wife as existing to supply it, to be the object of his childlike and worshipping devotion. She disappointed him,

and he felt that she rejected what was best in him, that he was misunderstood, and injured in the deepest fibres of his soul, his truest, tenderest affection. Perhaps on her side she was longing for a strong, wise, fatherly love from one whom she could respect and admire. She may even have thought for a day or two that she had found such a love on no better evidence than his masculinity.

Had these two become aware of their unconscious childish tendencies, reason might have led either of them to understand and tolerate the other's emotional attitude. We do not go on crying for the moon when once we realise that it is indeed the moon for which we have been crying, and that it is unattainable. We turn to some lesser luminary within our reach to satisfy the longing for possession, and looking at the moon afresh, discover other longings it fulfils. Where primitive tendencies wreck the happiness of lives it is often because they remain unconscious.

The attitude of mind, then, inevitable to the dreamer, and shared by the primitive and the child, is one in which he sees external things indistinctly from himself; as symbols of the objects of his desire and emotion; interesting on account of their symbolic value; and heaped with fantasy. This mental attitude is consciously adopted by the poet, or the artist, in a sphere to which it is perfectly appropriate—the quest of beauty; but it is unconsciously adopted by all alike in daily life, without regard to beauty, and often inappropriately enough.

To gain a clearer understanding of unconscious symbolism, and of its far-reaching effects on thought, we will glance at its prototype, the symbolism of the Middle Ages. The tendency, innate in man, to see things around him as symbolical representations of his own feelings, was accepted without question by the mediævalist. The moaning wind expressed his despair, the gentle cooing dove his melting moods, the goat,

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with its fierce appearance and unbridled appetite, his cruelty and greed. Symbolic meanings, thus conceived, were fixed by the Church, who practically ruled, what each well-known bird, beast or plant should be taken to represent, regarding early writers on the matter as authoritative.<sup>11</sup>

It did not occur to the typically mediæval mind—in this respect thoroughly primitive—that the sea is not angry, that the dove is a most quarrelsome bird, and that the goat is not at all cruel and no more greedy than any other animal; or, if it did occur, the idea was dismissed as *irrelevant to any conceivable purpose*. It was not what these things are, that interested a man, it was what they represented in the human soul. He thought of them as being there at all for the purpose of expressing man's meaning.<sup>12</sup>

With the advent of science this attitude was relinquished, but traces of it may still be found in the treatment of animals. Bullfinches have been blinded to make them sing. Although deprived of sight, they symbolise light-hearted gaiety, because a human being who whistles like that is happy. Those who crave for something natural and pretty on which to lavish affection, may see it in the caged bird. The empty cage is to them a dismal sight, a "little, mute, tenantless dwelling which was yesterday alive with fluttering love."<sup>13</sup> But one in whom the love of freedom flows strong and deep, may see the caged bird as an unhappy prisoner.

" A robin rodbreast in a cage  
Puts all Heaven in a rago." <sup>14</sup>

The empty cage, to such an one, is the symbol of release from captivity.

According to psycho-analysts, this sort of symbolism has always a subjective and personal bearing. It is those particular emotions which are incompletely satisfied in the daily life of the individual which over-

flow, and colour surrounding objects. For example : they who repress self-pity are excessively prone to see others as pitiable; they who unconsciously ill-treat their own animal natures, may take up the cudgel too readily on behalf of dumb animals, and exaggerate the pain inflicted on them. They who give no conscious expression to hatred and revenge, sometimes project these repressed emotions on to neighbours, till they live in a world where men seem actuated by little else.

To take an illustration from modern poetry : Walt Whitman would seem to project his own "placid and self-contained spirit" on to animals, when he describes them as "placid and self-contained." His vision is of Puss before the fire, not of the tiger-like creature in pursuit of prey; of the owl at roost, not that same owl on his nocturnal round in June, amid a flustered bevy fearful for their young. "Not one," says he of the animals, "is demented with the mania of owning things"; yet the proverbial dog is no more ready to share his bone than the mine-owner his royalties. "Not one kneels to another"; but how else describe the humble adoration offered by one horse or dog to another of stronger individuality? "Not one," he continues, "is respectable or industrious over the whole earth," and the sluggard gasps, for however much over-praised, since the days of Solomon, he cannot doubt the tireless industry of ants; while that strenuous spinster, the worker bee, arouses a strong suspicion of smug respectability as she calmly disposes of the idle, good-for-nothing drone. Does not the whole passage suggest that we are prone to see in animals whatever we project on to them from ourselves?

To those who have submitted their dreams to psycho-analysis the general truth of "projection" is put beyond a doubt; but its particular application must often be at fault, or we should have more agreement amongst psycho-analysts themselves. Perhaps each

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analyst is apt to see in the dreams of others just what reflects his own under-expressed tendencies, proving, not that his theory is mistaken, but that he, as well as other men, affords an illustration of it.

Desire, then, and emotion, lead to the projection of fantasy; and the question may be asked: "What has logic to do with feeling?" The answer is: "Much." Thought is permeated by feeling, and inseparable from action, and the concern of logic is with all three. Emotions are illogical which do not correspond with facts, or which are out of harmony with the general scheme of the individual's emotional life. Exaggerated grief, excessively prolonged, is an instance of illogical emotion. If I cannot get over the death of a dog in a few weeks or months; that of a kinsman in a few months or years, the psycho-analyst would say that, in addition to my grief at their death, I am heaping fantasy of a purely subjective kind, regarding them unconsciously as symbols of something in myself, which one half of me destroys, and the other half mourns inconsolably. It is easy to discern projected or misapplied emotion in the case of the old lady who pities little boys for having to climb trees, of the tired mother who deploras over-strain in every draught-horse, or of the strong and hearty man who is sure that children enjoy working before school-hours.

Projection of fantasy accompanies the process of identifying ourselves with other people, of feeling ourselves into their situation. Such identification is an essential part of sympathy; it is indeed "half the battle"; but the other half is an objective or scientific view of the objects of sympathy, an imaginative attempt to realise what we should feel in their place with their feelings. Without identification, sympathy cannot exist; but without an objective effort of imagination, of later growth, it often supplies premisses which do not tally with facts.

How comes it, that unconscious Subjective Symbol-

ism survives, so largely as it does, in waking life? It must be remembered that self-expression is one of the deepest of human needs, and that the self is expressed by symbolism or dramatisation, as well as by action direct. For example, a man has an impulse towards generosity; to express it he may picture himself as a bountiful giver, adopt a generous pose, and find satisfaction in contemplating generous behaviour. He gets more of this from a Dr. Barnardo rescuing hundreds, or from a Robin Dinner Fund feeding thousands, than from the thoughtful expenditure of a shilling on some one mother of children. If the primitive nature of his emotional satisfaction be disclosed to him he feels uneasy. No one quite liked it when "the Poorest of the Poor" were invited from "the Slummiest of the Slums" to fill themselves for once with beef and ale at the expense of kings.

Generally speaking, we find in each individual a sane proportion between action and dramatisation. Both are natural modes of self-expression, but where one is exaggerated the other goes short. Thus sentimentality and "gush" accompany abnormally hard-hearted conduct. People do not sentimentalise when their tender feeling is adequately expressed in deeds, but rather when it is repressed, and driven to find symbolic outlet.

Accordingly, if a stock emotion is getting less than its due in daily conduct, it is likely to get more than its due in some symbolic form. It was just when cruelty to children was habitual with the upper classes that children were the objects of most fulsome flattery. Even Blake, who could write so movingly of the woes of the little chimney-sweep, lent himself to the prevailing fashion of glorifying those infant prodigies who "commenced their careers at three, became expert linguists at four, profound philosophers at five, and died of old age at seven."<sup>15</sup> The people who shed tears over Sir Thomas Lawrence's "Boy with a Kid"—(his large, innocent

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eyes turned heavenward, his entrancing curls and immaculate rags in no way disarranged by a scramble over mountain rocks)—were the same people who could put little boys, without kids, to guard the trap-doors of coal-mines, where they sat “for twelve hours consecutively in solitude, silence and darkness.”<sup>16</sup>

Callousness to suffering may even be accompanied by a gush of humane emotion towards a representative of the very class ill-treated. Thus in our own times it is when property outvalues life, and heroes are rewarded with the workhouse, that for a delirious day the nation glorifies selected symbols of heroic deeds, and offers adulation to the Atlantic fliers.

Cruelty is obscured as well as sentimentality by the primitive, egocentric poise of mind. Miss Burney could see a child of ten as “a sweet Syren” who “sang like an angel” and “wept tears of emotion without disfiguring her pretty face”;<sup>17</sup> but the same mode of projecting fantasy which makes one child a Syren makes another a Fiend. In days when people believed in changelings, parents were found capable of regarding their offspring as dangerous devils. As late as 1875, says Dr. Brewer,<sup>18</sup> two Irish parents were tried for boiling their four-year-old boy to death as a changeling, the poor little fellow protesting all the time that he was not a devil, but Johnny Mahoney. To the people nowadays who advocate “Fewer Hun Babies” the little children they would have us starve are not Johnny Mahoneys, but devils. Just so the sparrow that St. Dominic plucked alive was not an unhappy little sparrow, but the fiend incarnate;<sup>19</sup> while to this day the friendly toad earns a persecution as little deserved because it symbolises diabolical forces.

The projection by each man of “the devil” of his own unconscious mind on to other people, has brought about the worst of the world’s cruelties: legal torture, religious persecution, terrorism, war, and various forms of social intolerance. As regards political and social

influence, however, the symbolic "devil" is outdone by the valued and respected "self." Vested interests, class privileges, professional loyalty, clan and family devotion—the worst as well as the best in our social structures—all are fortified by a tendency to project the self and to see it symbolically with a halo of unconscious origin.

The mediocre minister of State rises to emergencies because in the eyes of his family, class or party, he stands for all that is trustworthy and desirable—a symbol of themselves. The more ordinary he be, the more is he appreciated on this very score, and Englishmen adore an Edward VII, as the Greeks worshipped the leader of the Chorus (from whom evolved a God), a man like every man, one in whom each may see the self of his fancy.<sup>20</sup> Gladstone became the idol of his age because his commonplaceness as a churchman condoned his inspiration as a statesman. The conspicuous mediocrity of his theology and of his literary taste brought him to the level of the masses and allayed suspicion aroused by the daring originality of his foreign policy. His form and features came to symbolise the degree of uprightness compatible with safety, a caution which put its foot down on the New Woman, along with a benevolent justice which had her made acquainted with the Classics.

The public is gullible because, within limits, it enjoys being gulled; likes to have scope given to its symbolising tendency. Should a statesman arise of outstanding mediocrity and thoroughly respectable connections, resembling Tenniel's John Bull in personal appearance, such a man might for a time do almost anything he liked with us;<sup>21</sup> he might lead us, if he chose, to exterminate foreigners, to make compulsory the consumption of English beef and Scotch whisky, and the maintenance of horse-racing; he might induce us to close music-halls and cinemas, to abolish elementary education, and to enforce the attendance of the poor at public worship. He would have to be supported, it is true, by



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representative men and women, obviously prosperous, and successful in their various trades and professions, upholders of the orthodox religions or irreligions, and a little—just a very little—unconventional. He would need to advertise on the scale of a Harmsworth, constantly to impress upon us how happy we were, to identify the public enemies with the special bugbears of the powerful classes, and, in short, to play down to the primitive tendencies of the unconscious mind, its tendency to see things as they are not, but to be deluded by wishes, and fears, and all the other misguiding forces of unconscious motive.

There would soon be a reaction, however, for mankind is becoming more, and not less, enlightened; harder, and not easier, to dupe. To a certain extent men and women of this type do constantly arise and tempt us astray. They believe in themselves, as a rule, even more than other people believe in them. We listen and approve, but in the main we do not act upon their exhortations. A man or woman to-day of strong personality and great energy, who shares the convictions, the prejudices and ignorances of the vulgar, is sure of immediate, but passing, success. To live to enduring fame, a leader must be ahead of his time, see things more truly than his fellows; make explicit the developing thought of his generation, not exploit the moribund survivals of his ape-like ancestors.

We have spoken of subjective symbolism as the source of grave and dangerous fallacy, but we must not close without a tribute to its value and beauty in the sphere of poetry and religion; in the whole of life, that is to say, regarded in its poetical and religious aspect. The danger, we repeat, lies not in symbolism, but in symbolism remaining unconscious, defeating the conscious aim to state objective truth, by the unconscious aim to express subjective emotion. To "call a bush a bear" may be to make a false statement about the bush, which is no bear; or it may be, as in a dream,

to state a truth concerning the emotion of fear. The typical myth, or fairy tale, expresses subjective truth; the scientific classification expresses objective truth; and both are equally logical. The usual aim of ordinary speech is to express a certain mixture of the two—"How like a bear is that bush!"—and at any rate to know which kind of truth is meant. This aim is helped by Logic.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup> For a popular account of psycho-analytic teachings see Dr. Constance Long's *Psychology of Phantasy*, and works by the present author, and by Dr. Maurice Nicholl. For stiffer works on the subject see Freud's *Dream Interpretation*; Jung's *Collected Papers on Psycho-Analysis*, Pfister's *Psycho-Analytic Method*, and Dr. Ernest Jones's *Psycho-Analysis*.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Giles, *China and the Chinese*, 1902, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*, 1851, I. 190.

<sup>4</sup> *Prelude*, I. 378-86.

<sup>5</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., II. 147.

<sup>6</sup> "He showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazel-nut," *Comfortable Words*, ed. Rev. Dundas Harford, 2nd ed., p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> "Little Mary Bell had a Fairy in a nut," Wm. Blake's *Poetical Works*, Oxford Edition, 1913, p. 178.

<sup>8</sup> *Paradise Lost*, Bk. IV. line 497.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, line 634.

<sup>10</sup> Life by E. Lepelletier. Trans. 1909. See e.g. p. 234.

<sup>11</sup> See *Christian Iconography*, M. Didron; *Symbolism in Christian Art*, F. E. Hulme; and *Animal Symbolism in Ecclesiastical Architecture*, E. P. Evans, where this point is brought out. The chief "authority" was *Physiologus*, a Syrian compilation of Alexandrian origin before the 4th century. For a list of the sources of Bartholomew's *de Proprietatibus Rerum* (date about 1250), see Robt. Stoele's *Medieval Lore* (Elliot Stock), 1893.

<sup>12</sup> H. O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind*, 1911, I. 76, 77.

<sup>13</sup> Countess Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, *The Place of Animals in Human Thought*, 1909, p. 57.

<sup>14</sup> Wm. Blake, *Auguries of Innocence*, op. cit. p. 171.

<sup>15</sup> *A Father's Memoirs of his Child*, 1806, by Dr Malkin, Head Master of Bury Grammar School, with a frontispiece by Blake. See Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, 1863, I. 10.

<sup>16</sup> J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Town Labourer*, 1917, pp. 26-27.

<sup>17</sup> Agnes Repplier, *A Happy Half-Century*, 1908, pp. 152-3.

<sup>18</sup> *Dictionary of Miracles*, 1901, p. 381.

<sup>19</sup> G. G. Coulton, *From St. Francis to Dante*, 1906, p. 297

<sup>20</sup> Miss J. Harrison, *Themis*, 1912, p. 46.

<sup>21</sup> See an amusing satire, *Sir Edward*, publ. May 1911.

## CHAPTER V

### LANGUAGE

Man finds his true ideas : his making of them is the finding.—  
HENRY JONES.

IN dreams we saw a reversion to more primitive modes of consciousness, but language shows the struggle upwards, the ideals to which man as thinker is continually aspiring. Language is the *magnum opus* of the unconscious mind, the triumph of its inherent logicity. For in any language committed to writing we find two things : a great body of true knowledge, and a powerful and many-sided instrument for right reasoning. Both have been originated, prized, and continually modified by the unconscious minds of countless individuals in successive generations. They worked instinctively, by trial and error, making many mistakes, many false starts, but in the long run successfully accomplishing their corporate aim, the better apprehension of reality.

In language, says Mr. Pearsall Smith, "behind all the phenomena of changing form, we are aware of the action of a purpose, an intelligence." This force, he says, we only know by its workings. "It is not a conscious or deliberate, but a corporate will."<sup>1</sup>

Man all along consciously pursues one practical set of aims, to live and thrive ; but once become reflective, he finds that he has actually been achieving various others, hitherto followed instinctively and intuitively. One such is the aim to think clearly and to reason rightly, and this he achieves by means of language.

Language embodies the laws of thought, the rules of right reasoning, unconsciously created and obeyed by those who moulded speech. To discover them, the student of logic might approach language in company with the student of "Semantics," in the spirit in which every scientific enquirer approaches those natural objects which form the subject-matter of his science. The purposes and methods of man as thinker are shown in the structure and development of the product and the tool of his thought.

Bearing in mind that our present interest is exclusively logical, *i. e.* that we are concerned with thought only as "rational thought," we will glance at language from this point of view. Certain striking features at once claim attention.

(1) First, we notice that speech is uniform, cast into sentences, which, roughly speaking, are framed on one principle.

Here, then, we may look for some uniformity of thought corresponding to the uniform typical sentence.

(2) Secondly, the very existence of language assumes a purpose to speak the truth. This leads us to enquire, "What sort of truth?"

(3) Thirdly, every written language is continually changing, becoming more "analysed," simpler in some respects, more complex in others. Here, then, is a uniform mode of development which indicates a corresponding uniformity in the development of rational thought.

(4) Lastly, we notice that the purposes of language are sometimes defeated by differences in the background of ideas which are associated with the same words by different people using them.

(1) First as to the form or mould into which thought is invariably thrown by language. We have little to

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guide us as to what this may have been at the outset, since the origin of speech, though the subject of much speculation, is still wrapt in obscurity. One source is supposed to have been the spontaneous expression of emotion or desire. As the bird sings to its mate, or the lamb bleats for its dam, so did early man declaim to his partner, while his offspring clamoured for the breast in the unchanging tongue of babyhood.

However this may be, the commonest form or mould into which speech flows, in a developed tongue, is not that of an exclamation or expression of emotion, but of a statement of fact, or *logical proposition*, as it is technically called, formulated as "A is B," or "S is P." For example, "*That is a chair*"—a fact is here stated. So much is obvious, and for the present we will confine ourselves to obvious and striking features. Even when the purpose of speech is not to state facts, but, as in poetry, to rouse emotions, more often than not, the formula employed is that of a statement. Thus by the bier of Julius Cæsar the purpose of Antony is to stir his audience, through pity, to indignation and revenge; but he throws his words into the form of statements of fact. "I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him."

"The commonest and most important sort of judgments," says Mr. Sturt, is "an expression of purpose." "*I will do so-and-so.*"<sup>2</sup> But the form into which this is thrown is hardly distinguishable from that of a statement of fact about *me*. "*I am a person who will do so-and-so.*" Even in poetry every complete sentence names a thing and imparts some information about it.

The sentence, then, is so framed as to be a means of conveying one person's thought to others in order to acquaint them with objective facts. Language grew out of the practical needs, as well as the emotions, of mankind, and its typical form is appropriate to the *bona fide* attempt to convey information.

(2) This brings us to our second point, that language

rests on an assumption of general truthfulness. The instinct and habit of truthfulness implied by speech makes intentional lying a most difficult art, so that even the practised perjurer will trip into truthfulness under cross-examination. "The greatest liar," said Dr. Johnson, "tells more truths than falsehood."<sup>3</sup> The unconscious tendency observable here, is to answer any question, if we answer it at all, sensibly and truthfully, with a view to impart information. We rely upon this tendency to truthfulness when we ask the way, or enquire the time of day of strangers.

Truthfulness of this kind is pre-moral, like the instinct of self-preservation. When speech gradually came under the control of the will, and the notion of morality emerged, to speak the truth to friends was held to be a virtue; and two kinds of truth were gradually distinguished; so that "true" and "false" were seen to have one meaning when concerned with the facts stated, another when concerned with the motives of the statement. This difference between the two meanings of "false" is that between an incorrect statement and a lie, between ignorance and ill-will, error and crime, intellectual and moral untruth. The one meaning belongs to the sphere of logic, the other to that of ethics.

It is of great importance to our subject to bear in mind that logic is only concerned with intellectual truth. It has no immediate concern with moral truth, but assumes it, in so far as it is assumed by thought itself, and hence by language. For the pre-moral instinctive truthfulness, noticed above, does not disappear with advancing civilisation, but becomes conscious and purposive. Developed language, like primitive, still rests on the assumption that people mean what they say, just as civilisation rests on the assumption that people bear each other good will, while recent civilisation goes further, and assumes universal preponderant honesty with regard to personal property. Bad will, dishonesty, and falsehood are, racially speaking, suicidal.

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Moral and intellectual truth are allies. The morally truthful man may be slow of apprehension, but once he sees a truth he accepts it. He is thus amongst the first to accept new discoveries subversive of existing notions, just as he is the first to apply his principles of conduct to his own actions, though the result may be painful.

A love of moral truth is inherent in our national character, and every persecution for opinion finds English people ready to give their lives. But the intellectually truthful man is less common amongst us—the man who desires, from a love of truth for truth's sake, to know what things really are, himself and God and the world. We are perhaps as ready to fight and to die for obsolete facts as for those that are scientifically correct; for truths that are no longer true except as symbols, as for truths that are true both as facts and also as symbols. A learned Roman Catholic still writes books to show that man and ape had no common ancestor, and there are sane people who would go to the stake to uphold their conviction that a virgin-birth occurred precisely once.<sup>4</sup>

The morally truthful man may have little taste for intellectual truth, but still less for intellectual error. For some people, "love is enough"; speculative subjects fall outside their range of interest.

"So let us say—not 'Since we know, we love,'  
But rather, 'Since we love we know enough.' " <sup>5</sup>

(3) To turn to our third point, the direction of growth in language. As we have seen, the process has not yet been traced to its source, but it is generally supposed that there was a stage when human utterances were few and simple, like those of the infant who prefers to use a language of his own. Originally a single word must have done duty for a sentence,<sup>6</sup> just as with Helen Keller at one stage of her education "Milk" with a gesture meant "Give me more milk," and "Go" meant "I want to go out."<sup>7</sup>

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The most primitive speech yet discovered, however, belongs to an immensely later period, and is not simple at all. "Simplicity of language" (says Mr Pearsall Smith) "is, in fact, like other kinds of simplicity, a product of high civilisation, not a primitive condition." <sup>8</sup>

"In primitive forms of speech whole complexes of thought and feeling are expressed in single terms, 'I said to him,' is one word, 'I said to her,' another." <sup>9</sup>

We get an idea of the complexity of primitive words and their modifications, from the Indo-American languages, which would seem, at some past time, already remote, to have relapsed to a still earlier, from a more developed form. "The further back we go," says Prof. Jespersen of these languages, "the more the sentence was one indissoluble whole, in which those elements we are accustomed to think of as single words were not yet separated." <sup>10</sup> It is as though "Give-me-some-more-milk" had come to be used in a way which approximated it to "milk." A nucleus of a sentence in these languages corresponds to a noun or verb, and around it cluster other elements "like swarming bees around their queen." <sup>11</sup> For example, where *igdlo* means a house, "He wants to find one who will build a large house" is expressed by the single word "*igdlorssualior-tugssarsiumavoq*," and this is not by any means the longest word in the language! <sup>12</sup>

But in every language whose development can be traced, at a certain stage the same tendency is observed: to create separate short words expressing abstract relations, instead of making shift with additions or alterations to existing words.

The general direction of growth in language may be illustrated from that of Zoology. In Aristotle's time five hundred distinct kinds of animals were recorded, but they were irrelevant to one another, each, as it were, isolated. To-day over a million species are catalogued, but they are inter-related in systems within systems. <sup>13</sup>



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The change here marked is typical of evolutionary growth in general. Increased complexity of structure goes along with more complete unification of system. Thus Aristotle's five hundred animals were concrete and disparate, each had to be remembered and dealt with separately. The modern million fall into inter-related groups within systems of groups, where any one conducts the mind to all the others. The mind of the Ancient was like the owner of a small library in which each book is on a completely different subject. That of the Modern is like the owner of a large library catalogued and arranged in subject-groups so as to show inter-connection.

In primitive languages, things named are concrete and unconnected with each other, each has to be spoken of separately, and the word standing for it has to be modified in ever so many different ways according to its context. Thus "grammatical forms are longer, more complicated, more concrete and more irregular." In developed languages, things spoken of are referred to their classes; one word does for every particular instance in the class, and it never has to be modified at all, for separate words expressing relation will show its variety of context. Thus grammatical forms are "shorter, fewer, simpler, more abstract and more regular."<sup>14</sup>

To give examples: some primitives use one word for a knife when it is the speaker's own knife, another when it is his brother's, another when it is the tribe's, and so on.<sup>15</sup> The essential resemblance of all knives is not denied, it has not yet been sufficiently important to attract attention.

Later on, knives are grouped together as "knives," on the strength of their resemblance to each other; while my knife, his knife, and their knife, are grouped with other things belonging to me, to my brother or to the tribe as *my*, *his*, and *their* respectively, on the strength of the resemblance of the relation in each case.

In modern English the single word "my" serves

to show the relation to me, of anything named; because the feeling for personal property makes the relation an important one, and it has come to be clearly seen that this relation is the same, however different may be the objects which exhibit it. But this degree of simplification has not yet been reached by our nearest neighbours in Europe; while the Andaman Islanders, who can scarcely count beyond two, have no fewer than sixteen variants of the word which stands for "my."<sup>16</sup> It is, for instance, *dia* or *dot* or *dong*, according as it is used with *man* or *head* or *wrist*. Similarly we read that in "Wolof," a typical Sudanese language, it is not possible to say "the father"; only "the father here present" or "the father away in the distance," or "the father near" or "the father yonder."<sup>17</sup> The comparative importance of the father himself, and the unimportance of his relation in space to the speaker, have not yet been felt, and this, no doubt, because "father" means little more than our "kinsman," and applies equally to each of a group of men, brothers and cousins of the child's mother.

As language develops, not only do essential resemblances and differences come to be discerned and universalised, but unessential ones come to be dropped as irrelevant. In our own language the distinctions expressed by gender, case, and mood, are recognised as superfluous and have nearly disappeared.

Thus we see that rational thought becomes both clearer (because more discriminating) and simpler (because more unified) as it develops. Primitive thought only seems simple to us when we forget that resemblances are not noticed unless corresponding differences are noticed too. The Elizabethan spoke of crocodiles, moles, snakes, and earth-worms, all as "worms,"<sup>18</sup> but he showed thereby the vagueness, not the simplicity of his thought. When distinctions are blurred, thought is confused, not simple; and we may imagine the thought of those people whose language contains no word for

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"I" to be like that of a muddled dream.<sup>19</sup> In dreams the distinction between self and others may be lost with relapse to a primitive level of mind, a state described by Coleridge in his "Pains of Sleep"—

"Deeds to be hid which were not hid,  
Which all confused I could not know,  
Whether I suffered, or I did."

As we saw, other distinctions familiar to the waking self become blurred in dreams, categories confused; in primitive languages these same distinctions have not yet emerged into consciousness, and hence find no expression. Man is conscious and articulate, it would seem, long before he is clearly aware of such differences as those recorded by our "parts of speech," the difference, for instance, between a thing and its qualities, its states and its actions. He is vague or confused in his mind at first about the difference between himself and other things; and until much later, about that between himself and his social group. He makes acquaintance with objects related to each other in time and space, long before he perceives the difference between those objects and the relations connecting them with each other and with him.

The study of language reveals discrimination as one great logical aim, now become self-conscious. Not only in dreams, but in waking life, the mind is prone to relapse into confusion of thought while still using differentiated speech. Children, and primitives who speak advanced languages, revert to more primitive forms, as in Baby Language and Pidgin English. That is to say, the intellectually primitive mind uses primitive forms of speech because they best express confused thought, and carry no more discriminations than are mastered. The poet may revert to a child's language for another reason. He sees the implicit meaning in the primitive expression. Images coined before distinctions were made clear, merge, but do not contradict them.

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Discriminations are, in fact, foreshadowed; while the deeper import of thought and emotion are the primitive's as well as ours. Thus Blake when most child-like is most advanced. He must come back from the outposts of civilisation and clothe his thought in differentiated language to be understood by the multitude.

In all its new developments the mind of the day reverts to earlier examples, because in the natural course of evolution old truths and beauties are grasped anew on successive planes of consciousness. "There is nothing new under the sun"; every new thing is a further development of an existing pattern. "Everything is new under the sun"; for the pattern is never exactly repeated, but is perpetually changing in clearness and emphasis, if not in outline.

It has often been pointed out that language lags behind thought, since a thought may be new, but must perforce clothe itself in words which have done duty already. Hence it is the task of reason to bring language up to date, a task performed unconsciously in modifications of the vulgar tongue, consciously in the formation of technical phrasology. But in some ways, less generally emphasised, language is in advance of thought. In the case of the individual, his speech, at the bidding of unconscious impulse, may express a man's implicit thoughts, which will be his explicit thoughts of the morrow; while the works of genius forestall the mental evolution of the race. The very vocabulary of a Shakespeare educates successive generations, constituting as it does a storehouse of subtle distinctions and intricate ideas which stimulate and challenge thought. The language of the Bible, by its æsthetic beauty and moral fervour, constantly invites to a renewal of the past, not through relapse into intellectually primitive modes of thought, but by resuming and restating its emotional truths with fresh significance and fuller import. The language of the race, like that of the individual, is ahead of its thought, wherever it expresses

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distinctions not yet emerged into consciousness. Miss Harrison shows how the Greeks used a different word for "rite" and for "drama" before the difference between the two was sufficiently developed to be recognised.<sup>20</sup>

(4) But if language does not always keep pace with the thought it expresses, it has a more serious defect as a means of conveying ideas, on account of the personal and particular associations which cling to words.

An anecdote may illustrate the defect in question.

A loving father soothed his little girl who had night terrors. Guessing the cause of her fear, he told her that no lions would come near her, that they lived in far countries and could not cross the sea. He told her that angels guarded her. But the child's idea of lions was based on a picture of Una and the Lion, and another of St. Jerome and the Lion, corroborated by a glimpse, in passing through London, of the guardians of Nelson's Column. She thought of lions as faithful creatures, immensely strong and beautiful, who conferred distinction on their protégées, and didn't ask whether they were "good." Angels, on the other hand, she pictured as sneaky and mysterious beings, emissaries of God, the great Arch-Spy, flitting silently and in the dark. The child was partly reassured by her father's looks and tones—the language of love—and decided that in any case *he* would be to her a sort of lion, and guard her from the angels.

In this case a difference of ideas associated with the same word amounted to a difference of language. The father meant to say, "You are safe from danger." To the child he seemed to say, "You are in danger." The difference was due to age and experience; but misunderstandings equally great result from difference of time, race, class, party, or even taste. Eau de Cologne and decaying rabbit have opposite meanings to my dog and to me.

To understand a person's language we must know

the ideas and memories he associates with words, and when we do not know these, we must make allowance for the omission. It is only when dealing with purely abstract and clearly defined objects of thought, that we can afford to ignore associations. When we talk of "isosceles triangles" and "the squares of numbers," we may perhaps be sure of talking about the same things, but when we talk of anything less definite we may not. Such a simple phrase as "a pipe and a glass of beer," means "home and heaven" to one, "the way to hell" to another, and "two offensive smells" to a third. Here the same phrase may have different meanings even for fellow-citizens, but the possibility of misunderstanding increases with range of circumstance. Thus it is obvious that the notion conveyed by a doctrine of God as Father must be very different in the case of the patriarchal Arab and that of the Australian Blackboy who has many fathers, every man of a certain status standing in that relation to all the children of a corresponding status.<sup>21</sup>

In marked cases like this, we all recognise the need for studying one another's associations, in order to understand one another's language, but the need is more general than is commonly supposed, and its neglect leaves barriers to the mutual understanding of classes and races.

Take the word "Imperialism." To imperialists of the 'nineties it meant all that is greatest and best in our history. It called up a picture of weak women and children, and of childish races, dwelling in safety under the ægis of a strong, wise, fatherly, world-embracing power.

To radicals, on the contrary, it meant all that is worst and most disgraceful in our history—brave men languishing in prison, lowly races thrown into slavery, that vulgar kings and company-promoters might batten unchallenged on the produce of their toil.

The ambiguity we have in view does not correspond to that of a loose definition, such as sets lawyers

disputing whether the term "x" covers John Jones or no; it corresponds rather to the different aspects presented by John Jones to a friend who admires and an enemy who detests him. When these two talk of John Jones they talk of different beings.

Reasonable discussion advances thought, but how many political arguments consist in taking an opponent's term, attaching to it odious associations and then abusing it? The fallacy implied is this, that if two words have the same denotation they connote the same thing. Imperialism was *not* the same thing to Lord Milner and Lord Courtney, any more than is Socialism to Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Lloyd-George.

When the British public becomes more logical, as it is gradually becoming, it will no longer profit politicians to argue on false tracks and slay imaginary enemies; their supporters will require them to direct their energy to overcoming obstacles and promoting causes about which civilised mankind is in agreement.

A speaker need not necessarily mislead his audience by a different background of ideas; so long as the difference is detected and allowed for, he may be obscure, but not misleading. Illustrations add obscurity to his points in such a case, for their success depends upon the stimulation of kindred fields in the minds of speaker and audience.

To be understood at all, words must stimulate some background of appropriate ideas, and to be duly appreciated, this background must be large in proportion to the value of the truth expressed. An old truth restated so as to stimulate fresh associations is, in fact, a new truth, and perhaps the only kind of new truth possible. The bare statement of a new truth, however true, may fail to impress or convince. Darwin was sensible of this when he set himself the task not merely of enunciating the doctrine of evolution, which others had done before him, but of equipping the minds of his readers with appropriate backgrounds against which

to set it; for, as Blake has it, "Truth can never be told so as to be understood, and not be believ'd." <sup>22</sup>

It is the same with æsthetic values. The poet, painter or musician who strikes out in a new direction, and exhibits new and unaccustomed forms, must educate his public (as did Handel, Wordsworth and the Impressionists), must furnish them with new backgrounds of associated ideas for the reception of his works.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup> *The English Language*, Home University Library, 1912, pp. 25-6.

<sup>2</sup> H. Sturt, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> Birkbeck Hill's *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, III. p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> *i. e.* that one man was indeed born without a mortal father, while for all the rest who claim miraculous parentage facts are misinterpreted in the light of primitive theories. For miraculous births see Frazer, *Magic Art*, I. 255, 3rd ed., and *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, I. 78, 91 *seq.*, 3rd ed.

<sup>5</sup> "A Pillar at Sebzevar" (Ferishtah loq.), R. Browning.

<sup>6</sup> A. H. Sayce, *Introduction to the Science of Language*, 1880, I. 121-2.

<sup>7</sup> *The Story of My Life*, 1903, p. 318.

<sup>8</sup> Pearsall Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Jespersen, *op. cit.*, p. 350, and see T. G. Tucker, *Introduction to the Natural History of Language*, 1908, p. 404-5.

<sup>11</sup> A. H. Keane, *Man, Past and Present*, 1899, p. 363

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> J. A. Thomson, *The Study of Animal Life*, 1917, pp. 13-14.

<sup>14</sup> Jespersen, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>15</sup> Sayce, *op. cit.*, II. 5, and I. 121, and Jespersen, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

<sup>16</sup> Keane, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43-4.

<sup>18</sup> Topsell, *History of Serpents*. See H. W. Seager, *Shakespeare's Natural History*, 1896.

<sup>19</sup> Pearsall Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>20</sup> See J. E. Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*, 1913, Home University Library, pp. 37-8.

<sup>21</sup> See *e. g.* G. L. Gomme, *Folklore as an Historical Science*, 1908, pp. 232-3.

<sup>22</sup> Darwin, *Life and Letters*, 1887, I. 87, and Blake, *Proverbs of Hell*, *op. cit.*, p. 252.



## CHAPTER VI

### SOME LOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF LANGUAGE

Our concept of the class "tree" depends partly upon what trees really are, partly on what we propose to do with them.—  
HENRY STURT.

IN the last chapter we saw how sidelights may be gained on the structure and development of rational consciousness by a study of the structure and development of language. Primitive language embodies thought which in some respects is like that of the unconscious mind, the mind of the dreamer and the child. In dreams perhaps we approach nearest to our Aryan forefathers and the meaning they themselves attached to the words they bequeathed us. We are back in their world, maybe, when we dream of fire and the night, of wind and snow and thunder, of stars and dew, of trees and the nests they shelter, of feathers and of mice. At such times we are thinking of the same things of which they used to think, and calling them by the same names.<sup>1</sup>

One function of the mind, which we noticed as reflected in language, is the continual fresh discovery of shades of difference in things. Some fine discriminations which are familiar enough to ourselves are of recent origin.

We read, for instance, that it was not till the eighteenth century that people in their speech began to distinguish between their feelings and sensations on the one hand, and the qualities in objects which aroused them on the other.<sup>2</sup> In our own day we may detect some fresh

discriminations in the making, as, for example, amongst the ideas which centre round the word "symbol." A distinction is beginning to be made between an object which arouses complex emotions and the mental picture we make of it in consequence.

Thus we have, for example, (1) the real lion; (2) the lion-like qualities attributed to the lion in fancy; and (3), the picture or emblem lion which we are led to make in consequence. As a rule we talk of this last as the symbolic lion, and he symbolises the fancied leonine character; but distinctions amongst the three ideas are not yet clear. Sometimes the real lion is spoken of as a symbol of the fancied lion-like qualities, sometimes the emblematic lion is spoken of as a symbol of the real lion. In certain cases psycho-analysts find this trio of distinctions so important that they have coined a new name for the middle term of the three, and talk of a "father-imago" and a "mother-imago," meaning the set of fanciful ideas and feelings which the father or mother arouses in the mind of the individual son or daughter.

In this chapter it is proposed to examine a few of the important distinctions which are plainly recorded in language, and to see what is implied by them. Where a separate word-form is used it expresses something which is universally felt as distinct and uniform. The distinction and the uniformity are not realised every time the words are uttered, but are taken for granted and perhaps remain unanalysed. Nothing, however, is commoner than for enquiring minds to follow the example set by Socrates, and analyse the ideas which underlie the use of words.

We will accordingly choose certain forms of speech which raise oft-discussed problems, and which at the same time register the implicit solutions to these problems, so far as any have been found by the human mind in general. We shall enquire what notions are assumed by these word-forms, what theories are adopted

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as working hypotheses by every one who makes use of them.

(1) First, we will examine the notions of *the Universal and the Particular*. There is one sort of word—the proper name—for an individual, or particular object; another sort—the common name—for a universal object. We have touched on the distinction in our opening chapter, and here we shall carefully consider its logical implications.

(2) Secondly, we shall enquire *what sort of Reality* is attributed to things by merely naming them? By the mere use of words, standing for things, their attributes, states and actions, the speaker implies that these exist in some sort of way. Our enquiry will be: “in what way does he imply that they exist?” not “in what way do they actually exist?”—a question belonging to metaphysics.

From the standpoint of logic, thought, and language expressing thought, are to be taken as we find them, and any theory implied in them is to be adopted. To the logician such theories are true so far as they go, and he would expect the metaphysician to criticise this truth and to show the directions in which it may be supplemented,—made less incomplete.

(3) Lastly, we shall consider the notions of *Relative and Absolute Difference*, and, bound up with them, the distinction between the *Contrary and the Contradictory*. Language records these distinctions by word modifications expressing degree (hot, hotter, hottest); and by forms of the negative (*e. g.* hot, with its contradictory not-hot; and human, with its contrary inhuman).

These antithetical notions are of primary importance to our subject, so much so, that logical thinking is, to a great extent, thinking in which they are clearly grasped and steadily kept in view. The rest of the book, however, can be understood without this chapter, and readers to whom abstract thought is distasteful will do well to omit it.

(1) First as to the logical implications of the notion of *Universal* and *Particular*.

When Man begins to notice external objects he finds himself in relation to each thing, a relation which is as it were isolated and unique, but at the same time vague and indefinite. Later he discovers that he has been universalising, *i. e.* putting things into schemes or classes in virtue of their resemblance to each other, so that within any such scheme all the things are alike, and the same word will do for any one of them. This discovery means a clearer apprehension of the *universal* and of the *particular* character of objects of thought: on the one hand, a grasp of the intimate connection between any one object and all other objects of the same kind, and, on the other, of the uniqueness of each, its quasi-individuality.

The notion of universal and particular is implicitly recognised long before it becomes explicit or fully conscious, and it is easily confused with other cognate notions; in fact no mistake amongst thinkers, from Plato downwards (and in spite of Aristotle), is commoner than is the confusion between identity and resemblance, between the relation which a thing continues to bear to itself throughout changing circumstances and the relation that it bears to all other things of the same class as itself.

Let us call to mind some familiar object, and enquire what there is about it which is *universal* and what *particular*.

Let us suppose, for example, that I see an orange which is hidden from my companions, and that I describe it (after the manner of a popular child's game) without naming it. I say that it is reddish (since "orange" would tell too much), round, solid, smooth, small, heavy and cold. In so describing this particular orange I name some of its attributes. I may not succeed in making my listener think of an orange. I may rouse in his mind the idea of a billiard-ball, a cherry, tomato,

coral bead, or composition cricket-ball, and he may feel uncertain to which of these I am referring. In that case he holds the ideas of them loosely, tentatively, waiting for definition. That is to say, he has abstract notions of redness, roundness, solidity, smallness, smoothness, of heavy weight and cold temperature. He thinks of red in such a way that he is prepared to fix it either in a tomato or in a cricket-ball, or in anything else appropriate.

Abstract ideas correspond to qualities in things touched, seen, heard, smelled or tasted. One cannot think of an abstract quality (that is, form an abstract idea) without at the same time forming a vague notion, in the background of the mind, of a scheme of concrete things amongst which the idea in question has its place. Thus one cannot think of "red" without thinking vaguely of various red objects, nor of "round" without having a scheme in the background of the mind of various things each of which is round. To use a technical psychological term—when attributes of an orange are enumerated as above, an "apperceptive system" is stimulated by the name of each. When I hear "red" I begin to form a hazy notion of an indefinite number of things that are red, from a sunset to a postage stamp. When to "red" is added "round" my incipient notion is modified. If the ideas were suggested to me I should now dismiss the sunset and retain the sun, dismiss the penny stamp—which though red is not round, but rectangular—and keep the old embossed stamp on the stamped-envelope, which was both red and round.

I have thus framed a universal notion of red, a notion of red as a quality universal to all red objects, a general or universal quality. This much is taken for granted by the use of the word "red," or of any other class name. There is nothing in language, however, to imply that the quality red exists otherwise than in particular objects which are red—where Aristotle showed it to be. Similarly the notion of an orange is a universal notion,

in that it applies to an indefinite number of individual oranges all like this one.

(2) Our next enquiry is, what sort of reality do we attribute to the things we name by the act of naming them; as, for instance, to the quality "red"? What is logically implied about the existence of red, when we call anything red?

We have already seen that the meaning of the word "red" lies in red things, that red has no meaning in language, as ordinarily used, apart from things which are red. To a man born blind, red can never have a direct meaning; only a meaning from analogy with other sensations of which he is able to have immediate experience, such as sharp, hot, shrill. The person with normal sight has the power of seeing a red thing as red, whenever it is presented to his view. As he looks at it, or afterwards, as he recalls it to memory, he may mentally abstract its redness, as a quality belonging to an indefinite number of red things. The man born blind can never form an image nor a dream-image of red things, nor of red, can never know the ordinary meaning of the word red.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, as Plato showed, "red" means a certain quality in red objects which is perceptible to beings possessed of the power of seeing red. By the word "red," then, two things are implied: (1) the existence of matter, *i. e.* of material objects, of such a kind that when somebody looks at them they appear red; (2) the existence of mind, *i. e.* of thinking subjects, of such a kind that when specific objects are presented to them these are seen as red. This much is implied in every word, and the implication impinges on the field of matter and mind, without settling anything at all about the ultimate relation between the two—a problem which belongs to metaphysics.

Science has made a little further analysis a matter of common knowledge, which we will here review, since it helps us to recognise the distinction between mind and

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matter implied in language. We know that the red object is one which sends to the eye vibrating undulations of æther of a certain length. We know that the man who sees red receives a stimulus from these vibrations, which stimulus is conveyed along the optic nerve to the brain, where mechanical and chemical changes take place, producing in him the sensation of red. Now the arrangement of forces, both in the red object and in the eye and brain, spoken of in terms of physical energy, of æther undulations, nerve-currents, molecular vibrations and so forth, belong to the world of *matter*; while the sensation of red produced in the man belongs to the world of *mind*.

The distinction between these two elements involved in sensation may perhaps be made clearer by an illustration. We are familiar at fairs with a strength-testing machine, an apparatus for measuring the force of a blow. One hits a knob with a mallet, whereupon a mark runs up a stick, for a longer or shorter distance, according to the strength of the blow. Supposing a striker miss the knob and hit his own or his neighbour's foot, a current is thereupon conveyed along afferent nerves to the brain, which corresponds to the mark running up the stick. There the analogy stops. The next event is a feeling of pain, and this has no counterpart in the strength-testing machine. It is a fact of mind, which cannot be translated into terms of matter, any more than can the colour of a thing be translated into its shape.

The ordinary use of language pre-supposes the existence both of mind and of matter; or rather, it assumes a reality which implies the existence of both. The word "flower," for example, means a real flower. "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen," and we do not think it the less real for that. The idea raised by the word implies the existence of minds capable of observing the flower's blushes, did conditions of time and space permit. It implies, too, the existence of other flowers

which have been seen and appreciated, without which we could not form an idea of the flower which "wastes its sweetness" on creatures less interesting than ourselves.

What then, it may be asked, about the reality underlying those names which are applied to purely subjective phenomena? For example, it is not unknown for a neurotic person to see a red which is not there. Looking at a white sheet of paper he may see it as red (or green, blue or gold, as the case may be). This sort of red is not what is meant by the word "red" in ordinary language, and it need not occupy us. Logic presupposes sanity, just as it presupposes a purpose to speak the truth. It takes the normal mind for its standard, and understands the abnormal by analogy with the normal. Thus the subjective hallucination of red may be made the subject-matter of logical study. It is then seen to have a purely subjective meaning, like that of dream-images. It is a fragment of dream-consciousness appearing in waking life. Its logical meaning is not "that object is red," but "I am 'angry,' or 'frightened,'" as the case may be. In hallucinations and dreams, conclusions are logically inferred from premisses, but the premisses are supplied by a mind in a somewhat different poise from that of waking life, so that the objective character of thought is undeveloped.

To one who is sane and awake every word with a meaning implies a certain admixture of subjective and objective elements; to one who is dreaming, or "seeing red," the objective element is almost lacking.

The objective element corresponds to matter, the subjective, to mind; and we have seen that language presupposes the existence of both.

This is the case not only with statements concerning concrete things and their qualities, but with every form of thought whatever. An objective-subjective reality is implied in every thought, and in every form of speech expressing thought.



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At one time it was usual to hear sensation-proper described as the result of matter acting on mind; while artistic creation was spoken of as the result of mind acting on matter. This description is nowadays felt to exaggerate the difference, which is one of proportion rather than of kind.

We will here glance at these two elements, the subjective and objective, as they appear in various types of thought, and we will pass in review some examples, chosen to illustrate an ascending scale of imagination.

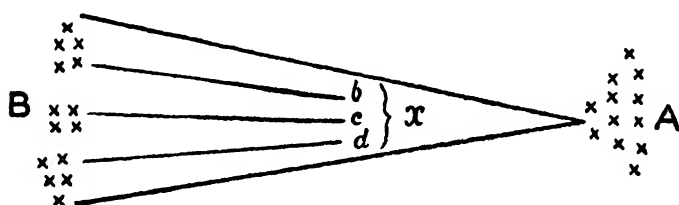
(a) The pure sensation (which is an abstraction, or hypothetical experience) presents most conspicuously the part played by matter, but it shows no less strikingly an act of creation on the part of mind. In response to æther undulations (for example) which stimulate nerve and brain, the mind creates a sensation of red. The mind may create this sensation, as we have seen, without the objective stimulus, should it be in a state of disorder. Thus a sensory datum and a creative activity are both concerned in sensation.

(b) Next we come to what is, in fact, the simplest act of mind discoverable in ourselves—an act of perception, or a “percept,” as it is called. Here we see the elements noticed in sensation, but we see, in addition, a new and different kind of mental activity, a synthesising, or, as Dr. Stout has called it, a no-etic activity.<sup>4</sup> The mind not merely creates a sensation in response to a physical stimulus, in creating it refers it to an object, related to other objects within a scheme. The reference to an object implies a revival of past sensations, themselves referred to objects; and it carries with it, by implication, an inference or conclusion from these revived percepts as grounds.

The physical stimulus *X* causes the mind to create sensations *b c d*, which in the act of creation are felt in connection with revived percepts, *B*, and are also at the same time referred to an object in a felt scheme of objects, *A*. The mental act is instinctive, and its

various elements are simultaneous, but the reflective observer when analysing them can detect an implicit inference: "because these sensory data *b c d* rouse reminiscences of former perceived objects, *B*, therefore I judge such and such an object to exist within an objective scheme, *A*."

To take, for example, an act of perception such as corresponds to the exclamation "There's my dog." I experience a sensation of "black, ragged-edged, quickly moving" (*b, c, d*), and in experiencing I refer it to something other than itself (*A*), viz. to my dog, in my garden, or in the road, as it may happen. I am enabled to do so because of former experiences whose traces (*B*)



B. Revived Percepts.

X. Sensory Data.

A. Percept.

have been touched up by this sensation. I do not say, "Here is a sensation of black, ragged-edged and quickly moving." I say: "There's my dog." In saying this I fit the "black, ragged-edged, quickly moving" into a *my-dog scheme*, in which the dog-over-there is related by continuous identity with the creature of a thousand memories. This scheme is part of a larger scheme, of, let us say, my home-life, within a system of larger schemes, such as my business-life, my life as a taxpayer, as the owner of dogs, my holidays and my neighbourhood.<sup>5</sup> These schemes interpenetrate each other, and are ultimately linked up with the whole of my universe of thought and fact.

In this case the two factors of mind and matter, the creative, synthesising faculty on the one hand, and the

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external stimulus which occasions it on the other, are easily distinguished.

(c) In the case of a memory, or an idea, they are scarcely less distinct. If I entertain *an idea* of a dog, it is plain that this idea includes some kind of a revival of the sensations formerly experienced from physical contact with dogs.

(d) Let us now consider the case of the *abstract concept*, and see what objective or sensory datum it includes. Take, for example, the concepts corresponding to "the good," "the absolute" and "eternity."

Even abstract and ethereal notions such as these, derive their meaning ultimately from such things as the parental kisses and slaps of childhood, the sermon that seemed never to be going to end, or the delightful story which by means of sequels lasted a surprisingly long time. That is to say, if these words have a meaning for us, it is a meaning which is reminiscent of objects seen, heard, touched or tasted. "The good" stimulates a field of memory in the background of the mind, which is the result of particular instances of things which were felt to be good or called good; things which appealed directly or indirectly to the senses, through an arrangement of molecular forces which was not mind, but matter.<sup>6</sup>

(e) Turning to *the creation of the artist*, or work of *imagination*, we find that this is an arrangement of revived sensory data, in schemes which are also revivals of schemes already experienced. Let us examine a few typical instances, and begin with a well-known visionary portrait of William Blake the poet-painter. His "Ghost of a Flea" depicts a voracious and inhuman monster.<sup>7</sup> The scheme of relation between such a monster and a world of human beings, is a revival of the scheme of relation between the flea, anthropomorphically considered, and its victims; and every one who suffers from fleas will recognise it. The material put into this revived scheme is based on sensory data revived from

various fields; reminiscences of the "articulated" joints of insects, of fish, and of figures in armour carved on Gothic tombs.

Even music, the most abstract of the arts, is not, as Abt Vögler would have it, purely creative, but is also capable of analysis into sensory data. Every piece of music, it is suggested, is built up of themes reminiscent of themes heard, arranged in schemes which are also reminiscent of schemes experienced through one or another of the organs of sense.

Handel is said by M. Romain Rolland to have created musical schemes from analogy with visual schemes. His music was "a poetic evocation of raging tempests, of the tranquillity of the sea, of the dark shades of night, of the twilight which envelops the English country, of the parks by moonlight, of the sunrise in springtime, and of the awakening of birds." <sup>8</sup>

The transposition of a visual scheme to music, implies that the scene was grasped as a whole in which parts were related to each other and to the whole, and that an appeal was made by parts and whole, severally and jointly, to the feeling for beauty, and to various specific emotions. The visual scheme spontaneously suggested an analogous scheme in the realm of sound, wherein parts were analogously related, and a similar æsthetic and emotional appeal was made. The music-scheme was reminiscent of the visual scheme, and the matter put into it to give it body was reminiscent of things heard. "He drew not only from the sources of learned and refined music . . . one finds noted down in his manuscript the street-cries of London, and he once told a friend that he received many inspirations for his best airs from them." <sup>9</sup>

Thus if M. Rolland be right (and we do not doubt it), Handel experienced an arrangement and sequence of form, colour, light and shade, with meanings and associations. Taking for his material, sounds which crowded from unconscious memory, he arranged them

into a whole, with a similar æsthetic and emotional effect. The same emotional temperament which led him to enjoy the sight-scheme, led him to revive it, with another content, in the sound-scheme. The result was something different from so-called "programme" music; it was translation, not imitation. The quiet beauty of the "pastoral symphony" is like the quiet beauty of meadows and flocks by moonlight, there is no tinkling of sheep-bells or murmuring of men to suggest the visual imagery. But whether M. Rolland be correct or no in Handel's case, the general truth of his analysis is convincing to every one familiar with dreams, and their manner of transposing analagous schemes from the sphere of one sense organ to those of others.<sup>10</sup>

Many of Blake's drawings, which illustrate his poems, afford good examples of such transposition. He does not draw the objects and situations described in the text; he produces the same emotional effect by imagery which is analogous, not imitative.<sup>11</sup>

A quick eye for detecting analogies, that is, the resemblance between different schemes of inter-relation, is characteristic alike of the inventor, discoverer, artist and philosopher, each in his own sphere, for it is a different kind of scheme which attracts the attention of each. Every such scheme has objective reality; the mind that conceives it is partly creative and partly reminiscent. No scheme of relations between things is conceivable, which is not based on some actual scheme of relations experienced, amongst things felt, seen, heard or tasted. Thus the act of artistic creation is a development of the simplest percept, and involves a similar synthesis. The connection between simple and more complex mental states may be made clearer by comparing examples of each.

(i) An act of trained observation may be compared with a percept. For instance, when an astronomer looks at the sky, or a musician listens to a sonata, or a housewife surveys her store-cupboard, the mental act in each

case is such as is performed when one says, "This is a dog, a book, a chair." The sensory data, in being grasped by the mind, are referred to schemes of inter-related objects, with whose inter-relations the observer is familiar.

(ii) A scientific discovery, such as Darwin's of "the survival of the fittest," in its early stages corresponds to the simple idea, the idea of a dog, book, chair. Before he published it, Darwin verified his imagined synthesis by a careful and prolonged comparison with facts, thereby making it correspond with a percept. It was as though something he saw put into a man's head the idea of a dog, but before telling any one, he went out and looked carefully to make sure that it was really a dog which was there.

(iii) An act of artistic creation is like an idea which remains an idea, and has its reality tested by its correspondence to facts in the sphere of emotion—emotion which is inseparable from, and dependent on, sensory data. Let us look, for instance, at an imaginative work of art such as Michael Angelo's fresco of The Last Judgment. It expresses, let us suppose, the emotions of awe, reverence, worship and fear, which are roused by the contemplation of Titanic figures, reminiscent of real people, and suggesting, by their associations, divine justice, power and vengeance. The truth of the picture may be tested in two directions: first, is there correspondence between the ideas and the emotions intended to be aroused by suggestion? Do justice, power and vengeance nowadays in fact excite reverence and awe? Secondly, do the sensory images presented actually arouse the ideas intended? Do figures of immense strength and grandeur, engaged in meting out rewards and punishments, raise associations with justice, power and vengeance, or with other baser passions? If these are no longer the responsive sentiments in normal minds, then the scheme is shown to be true, may be, for the artist's own time, or for

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some minds, but not for all time, or for all men. The modern humanitarian, or Christian, might see the meaning which the picture conveyed to Michael Angelo, and appreciate the truth of that original meaning, although it would now convey another and different meaning, and one not intended.

To sum up, we see that language, embodying thought, implies the existence of mind and of matter, in close inter-relation, but fundamentally different from each other, and that these are implied in every kind of mental activity. Alike in the perception of objects which strike the senses, and in the creation of works of art, the mind produces content and form, reminiscent of content and form already experienced amongst external objects.

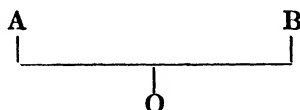
(3) The last implication of language to engage our attention is that most frequent source of ambiguity, the difference between the *contrary* and the *contradictory*, and the distinction, closely bound up with it, between difference which is *relative* and difference which is *absolute*. The first is shown in language by formulæ for degree, the second by the negative. For instance, in the case of "small, less small (or larger), large," relatively diminishing degrees of one quality pass into relatively increasing degrees of another and complementary quality; in the case of small and not-small, large and not-large, the quality is absolutely denied.

If we take the ordinary thermometer as a measure of heat, we see a relative difference, as regards degrees of heat, varying from, say, 20 degrees of frost to boiling-point. If we think of two points on that same thermometer, one marking the temperature of a bitter cold day in winter, the other that of a sweltering hot day in summer, we see that they indicate two things which are absolutely different, *i. e.* bitter cold and sweltering heat. Thus a cold day may be seen either as a relatively warm day, or else as absolutely different from a warm day.

These two ways of looking at the subject are both true. They do not contradict each other. Sometimes one,

sometimes the other is appropriate. It is poor comfort when we are without a fire, and the thermometer stands at 36° F., to know that this is a relatively hot temperature. On the other hand, the man is a fool who will not measure the heat of his cellar, if required, for the reason that it cannot have any heat, seeing that it isn't hot at all, but cold. These, however, are just the sort of irrelevant and mistaken notions that are habitually allowed to obscure thought, even by advanced thinkers.

Some psycho-analysts lay stress on the necessity for reconciling “pairs of opposites.” They point out, for instance, that love and hate form a continuum of degree. Thus love may be represented by *A* at one end of a line, which passes into hate at *B*, at the other end.



Similar pairs of opposites or contraries are to be seen in strong and weak, civilised and primitive, good and evil, beautiful and ugly, true and false.

For certain purposes all these may truly be regarded as “pairs of opposites,” constituting continua of degree, and passing into each other. This aspect of the matter is emphasised by psycho-analysts who wish to draw a certain moral, namely, that the satisfactory life is one which avoids long residence with either extreme; that if, for instance, love be too exclusively dwelt with in the conscious, hatred is likely to have undue potency in the unconscious mind, or vice versa. Every human characteristic, they say, in real life has its opposite or compensating trait, so that both should be given scope.

This truth need not blind us to the complementary truth, which is at least equally important, of the absolute character of the difference between any two qualities which constitute a pair of opposites. From one point of view the difference between two points on the lines



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*AO* and *BO* respectively, is an absolute difference. Hatred is never love, nor evil good, nor ugliness beauty. They approach but never meet. The moral usually drawn from this last account of the matter is that you cannot deceive yourself into thinking black is white, however nearly each resembles grey. Both morals are sound.

Except for certain purposes, so-called "pairs of opposites" are more naturally viewed as parallel continua; each member of the pair dragged apart constitutes a continuum of degree, and is thus brought into line with all continua of degree whatever, representing scales of quantity, as "some, more, most." We are used to thinking of things in continua, showing increasing degrees of characteristics, such as number, size, loudness, strength, brightness, as *e.g.* the scale of the piano shows pitch, and the thermometer shows degrees of heat. Much as we grade dress materials as more or less blue and more or less green, so can we grade human characters or actions as more or less loving and more or less instigated by hatred.

Any one continuum of degree is like any other as to its form; the content only differs. Thus different continua are felt to resemble each other, a loud noise to be like a brilliant light, or a large object, or a rough surface, and like a high degree of any quality whatever.

The colours seen in association with letters of the alphabet, and with numerals, are perhaps due to the positions they severally occupy in familiar schemes, such as the alphabet, the numerals up to a hundred, and one or other of the various colour schemes. Their associations, however, may belong to the private and particular experience of the individual, stored in the unconscious mind. Thus one man might see *A* as pink, because when a small child he gummed pink shells on to a box in the form of an *A*, or because a text with a large pink *A* hung in his mother's bedroom; another might see it as blue for similar reasons.

Not all difference admits of degree, *i. e.* lends itself to being regarded as relative. Thus the roundness of an orange is incomparable with its redness. The two exist, as it were, on parallel lines which never approach. Though two qualities be absolutely different and incomparable, yet this difference may not be recognised if they are always found together and vary together. We are unlikely to confuse the shape of an orange, which is round, with its colour, which is reddish. But supposing oranges were to be graded by size, and their colour varied uniformly with their size, so that the reddest oranges were always the largest, and the small ones were invariably very pale, then a man with an uneducated or primitive mind would confuse the two notions of size and colour; he would not be able to see the difference between "a large orange" and "a red orange," nor would he be able to conceive the idea of "a small red orange" or of a large pale one. Yet size and colour are incommensurate, fundamentally different. The notions of matter and mind are apt to be confused in just this kind of way. They are incommensurate, incomparable. Any attempt to describe one in terms of the other, except as a poetical image, is due to a confusion of thought, which perhaps only escapes detection nowadays, where there is a bias of unconscious motive.

In the same way we are apt to confuse the categories of moral, æsthetic and scientific value, which are also incomparable. It may well be that the good, the beautiful and the true always go together, but they are, none the less, as different from each other as are the size, the colour, and the shape of an orange. The man and woman in the street are bent on getting large oranges, and do not trouble about their colour; they wish to emphasise the supreme importance of things of the spirit (in spite of their slavery to Mammon), and they care little about the truth of any statement as regards physical facts; while they are nothing if not moral,

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and in their pre-occupation with morals seldom give a separate thought to truth or beauty.

The discrimination between relative and absolute difference is a recent one, just beginning to be recorded in language, where the words expressing it are mostly the deliberate coinage of one or other of the sciences. Thus the opposite of *alive* within one field of reference is *dead*, while both are contradicted by *inorganic*, a word coined to deny the appropriateness of that field altogether. We may compare euphonious (or harmonious) with its contrary discordant and their contradictory non-sounding; logical, or rational, as we have seen, has its contrary illogical or irrational, with their contradictory non-rational or meaningless. Similar trios are seen in love and hate, contradicted by indifference; alike and different, contradicted by incomparable, and in another manner by indistinguishable; large and small, contradicted by without size; instinctive and rational by mind-less; dense and rare by non-material; primitive and developed by not-growing; early and late by eternal or timeless; good and evil by non-moral; beautiful and ugly by without æsthetic significance.

We often do not know in what sense an author is using a term until he lets us see what, in his view, is its contrary and what its contradictory, and where he can tell us we are helped to follow his thought.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER VI.

<sup>1</sup> Pearsall Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, and pp. 246-9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Helen Kellor, *The World I Live In*, 1908, chap. x.

<sup>4</sup> See his *Analytic Psychology*, 1896.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Henry Sturt, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the Chinese "woman with a child," see *supra*, p. 48.

<sup>7</sup> See Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, 1863, I. 255.

<sup>8</sup> *Handel*, ed. 1916, p. 141.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>10</sup> See *Psycho-Analysis and its Place in Life*, M. K. Bradby, 1919, pp. 139-40.

<sup>11</sup> See *e. g.* the illustrations to *Jerusalem*, and *Milton*.

**PART II**  
**UNCONSCIOUS MOTIVES THE SOURCE**  
**OF FALLACY**



## CHAPTER VII

### FALLACIES OF OBSERVATION AND OF CONDUCT

It needeth to take heed, for if the soul be occupied about other things than longeth to the sight, the sight is the less perfect.—  
BARTHOLOMEW ANGLICUS.

WHEN a jelly-fish, or any other lowly creature, moves towards food and absorbs it, or moves away from an enemy, we suppose some sort of attraction or aversion to accompany its action, as well as rudimentary recognition of an object.

These three characteristics, which in their developed forms become action, feeling, and thought, are found by psychologists to be present in every act of mind.

Logic is primarily concerned with thought, from which, however, feeling and action are inseparable. The logical aim has three aspects : to act effectively, to feel justly, and to think logically. In each case the mental act is logically valid when subjective and objective elements bear a certain ratio to each other, *i. e.* correspond in a manner which is not accidental, but normal. Observation, argument, emotion and conduct, are all illogical when the subjective element does not tally with the objective.

Whence arises such a failure in proportion ?

We have already indicated our answer, which we shall henceforth assume as a working hypothesis; namely, that thought, feeling and action are disproportionately subjective because of unconscious traits which remain unrecognised by the conscious self. Thus a

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certain amount of fallacy is incidental to growth; but an excessive amount is a symptom of retrogression.

Every instance of fallacy has, as we saw, a purely formal aspect, which can be isolated and studied; but its origin is emotional, not formal. It is always one-sided interest or emotion which leads to the blunder in question, springing from relatively unconscious and primitive levels of mind. The result in consciousness may assume the form of any one of the familiar logical fallacies of induction or of deduction. We may argue from a false premiss, neglect the laws of deductive inference, argue irrelevantly, use words ambiguously, beg the question, argue in a circle, or fail to apply a general principle to a particular case; but the reason why we do so is to be found in unconscious interests and emotions.<sup>1</sup> A thinker can only become more logical by discovering in what directions these habitually tend to mislead him.

Sometimes they mislead him by means of a gap, or blind spot, in his sympathy, whereby he fails to observe things in front of him; but more often by giving a subjective poise to his imagination; as we shall notice in the cases presently to be examined.

Unconscious factors producing fallacy, be it noted, are not fallacious in their proper sphere, but only when they operate in consciousness without becoming harmonised. They are modes of thought proper to dream-life, thrust into waking life; emotions and desires belonging to a more primitive personality, unconsciously determining conduct; old wine in new bottles.

The most important sphere of fallacy is undoubtedly that of conduct, but before passing to the larger field, we will examine fallacies of observation, since it is with observation that fallacy begins.

In all reasoning alike, the mind selects material and works upon it to conclusions (inductively or deductively), which in turn constitute fresh material for reasoning. When we consider how premisses are obtained from

which to draw conclusions, it is obvious that each man notices whatever interests him, whatever fits his mood of the moment, and his habitual sentiments or dispositions. Amongst the citizens of London, for instance, there were some who regarded her in pre-war days as an industrial and social harmony, others as a scene of strife and discord. Both might have been equally logical. Each selected contrary, complementary data from amongst facts of observation, and drew, accordingly, contrary, complementary conclusions.

But the first man would have been illogical had he argued, for instance, from the servility of the working classes to their respect for their employers; the second had he inferred mutual hatred amongst Borough Councillors, from their mutual vituperation. Such conclusions would have represented a mis-reading of facts. It is easy to mistake signs of fear for respect; and "a passion torn to tatters" is not unlike the more weighty utterance of sustained hatred; but mistakes of observation far more gross and palpable than these are common in everyday life.

Not only the ignorant, the credulous or the emotional, are liable to see objects amiss, but even people with trained minds, bent on observing correctly and recording their observations with accuracy.

This has been demonstrated by Prof. Münsterberg, one of whose experiments may be quoted. In 1908 he tested the accuracy of general observation, with his psychology class at Harvard, numbering several hundred young men aged between twenty and twenty-three. "I asked the class," he says, "to describe the sound they would hear and to say from what source it came." He then struck a large tuning-fork. It was variously described as like the growl of a lion, like a steam whistle, a foghorn, a flywheel, a human song, or what not; and it was diagnosed as coming from various sources, amongst others, a bell, an organ-pipe, a horn and a violin.<sup>2</sup>



According to psycho-analytic theory, in each case the individual's judgment was influenced by unconscious bias. One student hears a bell, because in the background of his mind, perhaps, he lingers with that breakfast-bell which startled him from his slumbers; another hears an organ, because he is longing for the next choir practice, which will bring him to his favourite occupation, or his favourite girl; one has been reading of the Early Christians and dreaming of encounters with lions; another has persuaded his mother to a trip down the river, but is uneasy as to the effect on her nerves of the steam whistle on board. These are the kind of unconscious factors whose existence has been placed beyond a doubt by the analyser of dreams. They are linked, through their associations, with the main undercurrents of the particular mind in question, and of human mind in general.

One more experiment may be quoted, this time performed upon an unsuspecting audience. In 1907 there was a meeting at Göttingen of a scientific association "made up of jurists, psychologists and physicians," all, therefore, "men well trained in careful observation." Into this meeting there rushed (by pre-arrangement) a clown and a negro from a neighbouring circus. They shouted, and fought each other, and in less than twenty seconds had rushed out again. The president asked the members present to write a report of what had occurred, since the police, he said, would be sure to demand one. Now the negro had been bareheaded, but only four out of the forty witnesses noticed the fact. The rest gave him a hat or cap of one kind or another. He wore white trousers, a black jacket, and a large red necktie—a sufficiently striking costume; but he was reported as wearing "a red suit, a brown one, a striped one, a coffee-coloured jacket, shirt-sleeves," and so on.<sup>3</sup>

He was accurately observed to be a negro, but from the background of each man's mind, fantasy was projected on to this negro and supplied him with an

appropriate costume. Each clothed him in the garments which negroes were pictured as wearing in the workshop of memory and imagination. He wore a red suit in the eyes of one, perhaps, because a red suit was worn by a negro who had impressed himself on his memory; another saw him in his shirt-sleeves because the darkie at home should be in his shirt-sleeves at the moment, cleaning the windows; or he wore a coffee-coloured jacket because that is what the observer was hoping to buy for himself.

The thing seen is seized upon and distorted by fantasy, at the bidding of unconscious interest, especially at the bidding of any strong desire or instinct which is being inhibited in accordance with the popular method of auto-suggestion.<sup>4</sup> In every case, without exception, there is a tendency to see the already known. The unconscious mind has a large store of reminiscent images capable of various re-arrangements, and ready to coalesce with any fresh object of perception.

If the Göttingen experiment had been conducted some three hundred years earlier, no doubt some of the learned doctors would have been men whose subconscious pre-occupation was with witches and their master; and these would have observed two fiends in mortal combat, or the devil attacking a human victim.

A savant of the sixteenth century would embellish a dark-faced apparition with horns and wings, as readily as his colleague of the nineteenth would bestow upon it a hat and shirt-sleeves.

When witches were believed in, it was possible, on one occasion, for eight separate witnesses (four men and four women) to affirm on oath that they had seen the following "imps" overnight visiting a suspected witch. "A white thing in the likeness of a Cat, but not altogether so big, a white dog with some sandy spots and very short legs, and Vinegar Tom, a greyhound with long legs." <sup>5</sup>

By a similar projection of fantasy the lover sees the

form and features of his beloved in every distant figure, and hears her name upon the breezes. Such distorted observation is not the prerogative of "the lunatic, the lover and the poet," but is universal.

At one end of the scale of civilisation stands the professor of science, who looks at a bareheaded negro in a black coat, and describes him as wearing a hat and a coffee-coloured jacket. At the other end of the scale is the Australian Black-boy who goes out to hunt the ghosts prowling around his camp, and returns with the news that he has seen four and sent them packing.<sup>6</sup>

Natural History books, or "Bestiaries," up till modern times, are full of what seem to us glaring mistakes of observation. The toad is familiar enough to rustics, yet it was reported for centuries to feed on plants, and especially to observe a diet of plantain when in training for its combats with the spider.<sup>7</sup> Its striking feat of swallowing a worm or a fly whole, apparently went unnoticed.

In this case no doubt the diabolical glamour which clung to the animal hindered observation, but others besides the Devil's agents were as grossly misreported. Not only was "the Satyre a most rare and seldome scene Beast," but moles were described as having no eyes, and elephants no knees.<sup>8</sup>

One more example of mal-observation may suffice. Darwin tells how in 1876 a remarkable fact was reported by farmers and gardeners over almost the whole of England—the fact that the field beans of that year were all growing on the wrong side of the pod.<sup>9</sup>

Now they do not start growing on either side of the pod, but in the middle, and when they grow crooked they stick as often on one side as on the other. Perhaps Darwin's own discoveries were threatening the supposed symmetry of unconscious thought. The farmer, vaguely uneasy with the dread of having his ideas upset, fastened on a portent. He opened a pod in which the beans, starting from the middle, adhered to one side. It was

a common enough phenomenon, but on this occasion it appeared strange and striking, the opposite of what was right and usual. He assumed that the rest of the crop was to match, for nothing less than the whole field of his thought was threatened with a change from what it should be, from what it always had been.

The camera is the great modern corrective of visual mal-observation. When trees, for instance, have been photographed it becomes impossible for a painter to depict them as did Claude, who makes them "taper throughout their length instead of diminishing their girth at the points of sub-division." <sup>10</sup>

We now come to the second part of our subject, fallacy of conduct, or behaviour which is commonly regarded as illogical. Daily life supplies plenty of examples. "So-and-so's conduct," we say, "is quite illogical; it has no consistency"; and by that we mean that it is inconsistent with the man's own professed or known principles, or indeed with any set of principles which we ourselves can clearly discern and understand him to be following.

Amongst types of glaringly illogical conduct familiar to all, is that of the mother who is severe towards other people's children, but does not check her own; the male supporter of Women's Suffrage who did not lift a finger to help the cause; the rich man who preaches the beauty of poverty, but remains rich; the demagogue who inveighs against the luxuries beyond his reach, but, given office, proceeds to indulge in them; the impassioned advocate of reprisals who would not hurt a German fly; and the impassioned advocate of mercy who is merciless to his friends; the upholder of the rights of minorities who wishes to coerce Ulster, and the apostle of liberty who would have people punished for their opinions.

We live in an illogical world, and we are quick to detect other people's fallacies—to detect, but not to understand, which is the logical task now before us.

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To understand how a fallacy comes to be made, it is submitted, we must find its unconscious motives. These constitute the premisses from which it is unconsciously drawn. It would be logical enough at the level of mind to which it properly belongs, a level in which thought is more subjective, and less differentiated.

We assume that unconscious motives are understandable, in virtue of our common humanity. Just as one dog can understand another, so can one man understand another, and, being a man, he has some capacity for making this original intuitive understanding explicit. Human motives are shared by human beings, to a greater or less extent, imaginatively if not passionately. We need not be saints to sympathise with St. Francis, nor scoundrels to put ourselves in the place of Iago. The coal-miner has some idea of the responsibilities which confront a Lloyd George, and a Duke of Northumberland of those which confront a coal-miner. No man ever lived who was more incapable of villainy than Robert Browning, but he had enough of those desires and tendencies which produce crime to enable him, in imagination, to see the world from the point of view of a devilish ruffian; just as he could also see it from that of a naïve and innocent girl. He could appreciate worldly wisdom as well as other-worldly enthusiasm. We are not the various characters with whom we identify ourselves in imagination, though some psycho-analysts would like to make us think we are. Morally, we are whatever nature and circumstances have made us, along with what we have made ourselves—what we have chosen to be from amongst the various possibilities which offered. Intellectually, the same is substantially true, but the range of choice has been smaller.

We will now look more closely at some typical cases of illogical conduct, and try to gauge the unconscious motives which we assume to underlie them. It is easier to analyse the lapses of markedly logical people, and

the careers of not a few distinguished statesmen and dialecticians furnish well-known examples.

*Joseph Chamberlain's* is one. He changed most of his opinions in the course of his political career, but it was only towards the end that he recognised them as changed. His nature was so direct and sincere, that he exhibits, more plainly than do most inconsistent people, the underlying causes of his inconsistency. In the 'eighties he was an enthusiastic and extreme radical, regarding "the agricultural labourer" as "the most pathetic figure in our whole social system," and considering "the problem of the future" to be "how to promote the greater happiness of the masses of the people." The owners of property were to "pay ransom," the House of Lords was to be abolished, the agricultural labourer was to have "three acres and a cow."<sup>11</sup>

In the 'nineties he was an enthusiastic and extreme conservative. Each class was to keep what it had, and all were to combine against the foreign competitor. He now inveighed against the sharers of his old enthusiasms; and in so doing, it seems to us, that he revealed those underlying motives of which we are in search, unconscious premisses which help to explain his political inconsistency.

In 1894, speaking of the New Radicals, adherents of his former views, he said, "They are never satisfied with making any one happy unless at the same time they can make somebody else unhappy. Their love for Home Rule is only surpassed by their hatred of the Protestant and British minority in Ulster. Their interest in temperance is conditional upon their being able to ruin the publicans. Their advocacy of compensation to workmen is tempered by their desire to do some injury to the employer. Even their love, their affection for the Parish Councils' Bill is conditional upon their hostility to the Church."<sup>12</sup>

Here he attributes motives of hatred to his political opponents, motives entirely different from those recog-

nised as his own when he used to advocate the same causes. He sees the new men as acting from a desire to injure the upholders of privilege, not from a desire to rescue its victims. In so doing, does he not disclose the fact that a measure of unconscious hatred impelled his own former career as a radical? This hatred has been outlived. From social ties his sympathies are now enlisted on behalf of the class he formerly opposed; and things are so arranged that we can seldom pay Paul without robbing Peter.

The motives of those who try to benefit any class of fellow-beings may be either love or hatred, either love of Paul or hatred of Peter. Generally the two are mixed. Mr. Chamberlain started life with sympathies kindled on behalf of Paul, feeling deeply his wrongs and misfortunes, and with a corresponding indignant hatred against Peter. Later on he was brought into closer contact with Peter; it was Peter who now engaged his sympathies, so that he became apprehensive of his injury. His feeling for Paul was not extinct, however, but it had faded, and his sentiment was now theoretical rather than practical. His new attitude did not seem to himself to be inconsistent with his old, because sympathetic feeling for Peter and for Paul are not mutually exclusive. But the attitude of other people, who now held his former views with a more than theoretical ardour, he attributed to hatred. He realised how it would pain Peter to part, for instance, with some of his wealth, and he felt that any one who suggested such a course must be prompted by hatred.

In the 'eighties he was like a man driving a pair of horses, a white and a black (love of the poor, and hatred of the rich). In the 'nineties he changed his horses and drove a fresh pair, also a white and a black (love of the rich and hatred of the poor). There was nothing necessarily illogical in this. Both pairs were at his disposal. But he never fully realised the difference between them, never clearly knew which pair he was

driving at the moment, nor which horse of the pair was doing all the work.

He did not even clearly grasp the fact that one of his horses was a black horse at all, and at times he thought that both were white. Without knowing it, he owed his speed in each case largely to the black, and consequently he saw his political opponents as driving black horses only. "Champion of the Oppressed" was a title any one might be proud to claim, but "Champion of Privilege" had an ugly sound, and was not allowed recognition. Had his unconscious motives been brought forward, it is here suggested, in his radical days he would have known himself to be partly moved by envy and hatred of the classes he attacked. He would not then have posed as a disinterested enthusiast for reform. In the mellow season of his conservatism, he would, on the other hand, have been less suspicious of the motives of reformers, more aware that his own bank balance, and his ambitions for his grandchildren, prevented him from sharing their radical zeal.

His earlier regard for "the masses" we surmise to have been subjective in origin. He projected on to them personal and private emotions, unconsciously regarding them as symbols. Miss Harrison says,<sup>13</sup> "A man is ill at ease within; he is strenuous and eager for outside reforms. He naturally thinks his impulse is the reasonableness of the reforms. He becomes inwardly happy, at rest with himself. The reforms remain equally reasonable, but somehow they lapse." "Projection" is universal, and so simple as to be overlooked. Its detection seems to make fools of us, and the importance attached to it by psycho-analysts offends our pride, especially our self-esteem as rational beings.

For our next illustration of illogical conduct we will vary the field, and recall the career of *Charles Peace*, the famous burglar.<sup>14</sup> By night he committed burglary, and on occasion murder, in one sphere of activity; by



day, in another sphere, he lived the life of a quiet, respectable citizen, a lover of music and pet animals, and a moderate but regular church-goer. Apparently he enjoyed both lives, each of which enabled him to live the other; the bodily comforts, social amenities, and harmless recreations of the day, the adventure and excitement of the night, along with the pleasure of the expert workman who plies a craft. Here we see an abnormal capacity for playing a double rôle, due, it would seem, to a lack of the normal man's desire for moral goodness. This desire to be good, or safe, or socially approved, or all three motives combined, is so strong in normal people that they cannot be tolerably happy, unless their whole conduct conforms, more or less, to a single set of recognised moral principles. They could not live as Charles Peace lived, without being too inconsistent for their own mental comfort.

But the illogical behaviour of the typical *Business Man* is based on the same alternation of conflicting motives—first one, then another actor is “starred” in the theatre of the mind.

It is not true of the typical business man that he loves his neighbour on Sunday, and tries to get the better of him in a bargain on the remaining six days of the week. He loves him all seven days in one context, and in another is all the time trying to over-reach him. Altruism and justice are allowed free play in certain spheres of conduct, acquisitiveness in other spheres, towards one and the same individual. The typical business man will “give his body to be burned,” but not his share certificates. He will “bestow his goods to feed the poor,” but will not raise their wages until compelled. He is largely unconscious of his own motives in the matter. Thus Mr. Carnegie gave with the altruistic right hand what he withdrew with the egoistic left. He endowed libraries wherewith to educate the minds of workmen, but when the minds of his own workmen were educated to the point at which they struck for

better conditions, these he refused, and set in motion the force of the State to coerce them.

Love of money and of the power that money brings, pulls in one direction; love of men in another, and both remain partly unconscious. The desire for moral harmony, however, is a compelling force in human conduct no less than is the love of money and the love of mankind; and Mr. Carnegie, like all developed personalities, was driven by inner necessity to attempt a reconciliation between conflicting motives. The attempt is bound to fail so long as these motives remain unconscious, and the conflict accordingly obscure.

His philosophy of life, as propounded in his books, tries to reconcile the wealthy man to his wealth, by progressive steps. He admits that he himself aimed at becoming wealthy because he "never liked working for other people"; but this endowment with a love of independence, common to his countrymen, in his own case he believed to be the method chosen by Providence to provide the world with a Mæcnas.<sup>15</sup> Poverty, says he, is "the price which Society pays for the law of competition,"<sup>16</sup> and wealth should be considered "as a sacred trust, to be administered by those into whose hands it falls, during their lives, for the good of the community."<sup>17</sup>

Carnegie's philosophy of life applies equally well to Charles Peace. An innate instinct—the predatory—impelled him to burgle. Thereby he made a number of well-to-do people, in Blackheath, Streatham, and elsewhere, poorer; but he too played the part of at least a suburban Mæcnas. In his Peckham villa he was a pillar of the Church, a patron of the arts, and a promoter of humane relations in general.

It might be contended that Carnegie's innate instinct was fundamentally good, since it increased the wealth of the world, while Peace's was not, since it resulted in mere redistribution; but now that we have lived to see the world's wealth devoted to its self-destruction,

it is doubtful which man did it the worse turn, he who promoted surfeit or he who "let blood."

Charles Peace was mentally abnormal, and does not seem to have been troubled by the inconsistency of his conduct, but Carnegie, like most of us, was gravely troubled, and he revealed his misgivings, as we have seen, in his books.

This uneasiness, this desire to justify ourselves to ourselves and to our group, is a force always at work, driving mankind to become more logical from within; while the clash of interests compels in the same direction from without. A future generation of workmen, whom Carnegie has educated, will refuse to work on his terms, and the Carnegies of the future will applaud their refusal. A later generation of employers will be warned by the sophisms he himself bravely exposed in his search for truth. They will see him actuated by the acquisitive instinct, to a degree of which he was not conscious, trying alternately to make this instinct appear respectable, and to deny that it influenced him.

A third type of illogical behaviour is perhaps more difficult to fathom. For an illustration, we will resort once more to the lapses of the logical, and find them furnished both by *Sir Edward Carson*, and by the best type of *Conscientious Objector*. To take Carson first, from the point of view of those who see his conduct as inconsistent, yet sincere, for it is open to other interpretations.

Assuming his sincerity, Sir Edward Carson is an enemy to treason. He is loyal to king and country. Loyalty is of the essence of his being, and there is no humbug about him. Yet when the moment comes when king and country seem likely to issue commands obnoxious to himself and his friends, he ostensibly prepares rebellion, and allows his followers, on occasion, to threaten recourse to foreign aid. Having acted treasonably, sought treason and ensued it, he continues to represent loyalty, and to inveigh against treason in

other forms than his own, which he unrepentantly pursues. He is illogical, failing to apply a general principle to a particular case.

We suspect that the unconscious premisses of his conclusions are of too primitive a nature to be consciously admitted by an ex-Cabinet Minister. "L'état c'est moi," said the French king. The "king and country" to whom Carson devotes his loyalty, is a king and country who keep his privileges and those of his friends intact. A king and country who turned him into an agricultural labourer, or impoverished his political friends and enriched his political enemies, would get no loyalty from him—better the rule of Germany while Germany still had a Kaiser!

Events have proved that the sort of king and country to whom Carson is loyally attached is that which indeed exists. He appeals from Philip sober to Philip drunk, and Philip nowadays is seldom sober.

From another point of view he is more logical than most people, in that he adheres consistently to his own inconsistency. He is like those Northerners who were irreconcilable to the South, and after the war was fought and finished, continued to advocate coercion. The description given of them applies to him: "eminently conscientious, persistent, and sincere, with the qualities that enable men to stand alone and fight to the end for an idea or principle once espoused," but not to generalise principles nor to see their particular applications elsewhere. "You don't want to be impartial in a battle," said one of them; "you want to put hot shot into the enemy's magazine,"<sup>18</sup> and for them life is a battle. The logical result of such a view is civil war, but in Europe we have outgrown the stage of civilisation when civil war is chronic, so that these men are essentially anachronisms. Their attitude is the result of a vision so narrow that they never see their actions in a world-setting; it is possible only because their motives and those of their followers remain largely unconscious.

The position of the Conscientious Objector is somewhat similar, but he appeals (and appeals in vain) from Philip drunk to Philip sober. Like Carson's, his loyalty is conditional, given to a Commonwealth, which, as did our own in former times, respects the right of individual conscience, a right for which Englishmen have ever been ready to lay down their lives. The England of to-day is no longer the England of their ideals, hence they own allegiance to the England of yesterday and to-morrow. From their own point of view their conduct is logical, because they have made its premisses conscious, but from the point of view of the ordinary magistrate it is illogical, because they profess loyalty but refuse obedience.

In both cases, that of Carson and of the typical Conscientious Objector, their crime, which is technically treason, is felt not to be treason proper. Each man is ready to give his life for the Commonwealth of his subjective imagination, which he identifies with the real State, and which is indeed sufficiently like it to be recognisable. His abhorrence of a State which falls short of his ideal exonerates him from the duty of serving it, just as Hamlet's horror of his mother's crime exonerated him from loyalty to his mother. The genuine crime of treason is incalculably blacker, a readiness to jeopardise law and order, the foundations of society, and the blessings of peace, by acting against the Government of the day, in a secret manner, to gratify personal ambition or selfish aims.

We have called the fallacy-producing motives unconscious, and at this point we may explain more precisely what we mean by an unconscious motive. When is a motive conscious and when is it not?

There can be no difference of opinion in extreme cases. It is generally agreed that a man is unconscious of the motives for his actions, and unable to control them, when he is sleep-walking, or in a trance, or completely intoxicated.

It is submitted here that there is no hard-and-fast line, but a wide borderland, on one side of which the mind is unconscious and irresponsible, and on the other conscious and responsible. Every honest self-observer can convince himself on the point. If a man is coming-to after an anæsthetic, or is giving way to temper; in the one case he gradually reaches a point at which he can control himself if he will; in the other he gradually reaches a point at which he cannot control himself however hard he may try.

Complete unconsciousness is a state in which the question of self-control ceases altogether, and actions are purely impulsive, not under the guidance of the will. The important discovery made by psycho-analysts is this: that a man who is conscious and normal, may be unconscious all the time as regards certain actuating motives. These unconscious motives may show themselves as prejudice, bias, "projection" of fantasy, or as some neurotic symptom. As a rule they are resisted, in whatever guise they appear. Intellectual and moral honesty lead men to beware alike of prejudice and of nervous instability. But resistance does not always succeed, and motives may remain unconscious to a man himself, which are plain enough to onlookers.

Who has not come across the father, for example, who is obviously unaware of his marked jealousy of his eldest son; or the mother of her rivalry towards her eldest daughter, or the artist who unconsciously depreciates his fellow-craftsman? Who does not know the man who thinks that women are setting their caps at him, or the woman who suspects men of gross designs on her person, each unconscious of the repressed desires thus projected on to others? So afraid are some people of being diabolic or animal, that they refuse to admit frailties universal to mankind.

In such cases as the above, the motives are undoubtedly unconscious, and as undoubtedly affect behaviour. Psycho-analysts maintain that similar unconscious

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motives with similar effects on conduct are numerous and unrecognised, and the candid mind must at least admit the possibility of the hypothesis.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

<sup>1</sup> See, e. g. Thos. Fowler, *Elements of Deductive Logic*, Chap. VIII.

<sup>2</sup> *Psychology and Crime*, 1909, pp. 20, 24, 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51-3.

<sup>4</sup> See *infra*, p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> Notestein, W., *History of Witchcraft in England*, 1911, pp. 167, 168.

<sup>6</sup> Spencer and Gillon, *Across Australia*, 1912, II. 395.

<sup>7</sup> Bartholomew de Prop : Rer., quoted H. W. Seager, *Natural History in Shakespeare's Time*, 1896, pp. 306-7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103, 204.

<sup>9</sup> *Life and Letters*, 1887, I. 104-5.

<sup>10</sup> See J. E. Phythian, *Trees in Nature*, 1907, p. 221.

<sup>11</sup> *Joseph Chamberlain*, by Alexander Mackintosh, 1906, pp. 100-3.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>13</sup> *Alpha and Omega*, 1915, p. 164.

<sup>14</sup> See *A Book of Remarkable Criminals*, 1918, by H. B. Irving.

<sup>15</sup> *The Gospel of Wealth*, 1901, p. xxi. Introduction, and p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54. See also *The Empire of Business*, 1902, pp. 98-9

<sup>18</sup> "Studies in the South," *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1882, vol. 49, pp. 194-5.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SOME TYPICAL CASES OF FALLACY ANALYSED

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We cannot understand right reasoning unless we understand wrong reasoning.—HENRY STURT.

UNCONSCIOUS motives and modes of thought have been described as primitive, and it may be as well at this point to explain more exactly what is here meant by the term. It stands in antithesis to “civilised,” as “less-developed” to “more-developed.”

The minds of all men, we take it, are, broadly speaking, alike, but the civilised man has his natural abilities aided and educated from the outset by a body of knowledge in the written language, and by the traditional custom of examining and criticising, so as to arrive at independent judgments.

The primitive, on the contrary, has but a small body of inherited knowledge, and he has not yet acquired that critical habit which leads to its increase.<sup>1</sup> In this sense of the term we know that our ancestors must have been primitive, and we find that modern savages are primitive; while individuals and classes in advanced countries who escape education, or who live in isolated districts, are also primitive. Thus it is to the peasants of France and England that Prof. Frazer would refer us when we wish to surmise what our ancestors thought and did,<sup>2</sup> since primitive members of a progressive stock probably resemble their own descendants more closely than they do the descendants of a stock which makes little advance in civilisation. On the other hand, the



fundamental likeness of the human species is such that we are warranted in assuming that men think much the same thoughts, who live in much the same circumstances, and the so-called savage of to-day lives under conditions which in some important respects closely resemble those of our forefathers.

Hence we may turn to modern representatives of the Stone Age for certain mental traits which we ourselves are outgrowing. There we find them exhibited in forms which are easier to detect, and in some respects closer to their origin. It would indeed be strange were it otherwise, strange if we could not find a close resemblance between other existing species and ourselves, seeing how short a time, biologically speaking, man has yet had in which to develop differences. We are but recent comers in the animal hierarchy, and the other day all men were primitives. It is supposed that it may have taken a hundred million years for Man to evolve from the lowliest forms of life,<sup>3</sup> whilst a mere two million have passed, presumably, since he started on his career of development separately from the apes.<sup>4</sup> He probably took some million years to reach the stage in which we should recognise him as like the "natives" of to-day in backward countries; and it is only during the last few thousand that he has come to reason explicitly, to know what his purposes are, and to look critically at the processes by which he tries to fulfil them—in short, to assist consciously in his own development.<sup>5</sup>

Those best acquainted with our cousins the savages, assure us that they are just as logical as we, but that their reasoning is still more implicit.<sup>6</sup> When asked to give a reason for what he does, the so-called "native" does not give a true one, because his true reason is hidden from himself in the unconscious mind. A polite enquirer from Mars would find the same fault with the reasons supplied for many of their actions by our own men of affairs.

In this and the following chapter, we shall apply our theory of fallacy to seven typical cases, and attempt to come to closer grips with some of the logical problems they present. In each case we shall look for the unconscious motives which *ex hypothesi* are concerned, and having found them, we shall turn to more primitive man, to see the form in which he exhibits them. Analysis and comparison will enable us in a later chapter to frame a rough classification of fallacies, on the ground of the universal unconscious tendencies producing them.

In selecting typical instances for scrutiny, we are conscious of a difficulty which comes from the vastness of the field, including, as it does, everything that was ever thought or felt or done illogically, by the rational being, Man. On the other hand, any example will serve our purpose, just as any spadeful will show the chief constituents of the earth.

Let us then thrust the spade in here and there, rather than take down from their shelves museum specimens of soil. In our search for fallacy, we may be sure of having found what we want, first, wherever people contradict each other's conclusions; and secondly, wherever deliberate and considered action fails to achieve its purpose.

Nothing in life is unmixed, and no pure examples are forthcoming of any single type of fallacy. We shall look in vain for an instance of one uncomplicated motive, rising from the unconscious mind to upset the structure of conscious rationality. We must be content with cases in which such a motive plays a conspicuous part, and for the purpose in hand abstract it, and examine it, as an isolated factor—not because it ever is alone, but because by so doing we shall learn more about it as it acts and inter-acts in subtle and complicated syntheses. With this warning we will first enumerate our examples, and then proceed to analyse them.

(1) The "man in the street," wishing to know the

truth about "the descent of man," goes to a public library, and looks up the subject in modern scientific textbooks. These all tell him the same thing—to quote one of them—"not exactly that 'man sprang from a monkey,' as the vulgar idea is, but that man and anthropoid apes are collateral branches from a common Primate stock which remains hidden in obscurity." <sup>7</sup> In other words—to quote another textbook—that "Man did not arise from any of the known anthropoid apes but from a stock common to them and to him." <sup>8</sup> But the *Catholic Encyclopædia* in current use contradicts the textbooks. It says, "There is no trace of even a merely probable argument in favour of the animal origin of man." <sup>9</sup>

Clearly either textbook or *Encyclopædia* embodies a logical fallacy, since they contradict each other.

(2) The late Lord Salisbury held the opinion, generally agreed to be mistaken, that an increase in the number of licensed houses would not increase drunkenness. "My housemaids," he is said to have argued in the House of Lords, "do not sit down the oftener because there are a great many chairs in Hatfield."

(3) General Gordon was sent to Khartoum in 1884 by Mr. Gladstone's Government, in order to extricate the Egyptian garrison and inhabitants of the town, surrounded as they were by hostile tribes in revolt against the Khedive. Gordon thought that by the force of his personality he might bend the tribesmen to his will, and either quell the revolt or rescue the garrison.<sup>10</sup> He failed to do either, and his failure was evidence of some fallacy in his reasoning, and in the reasoning of those who sent him.

(4) Hundreds of middle-class and working-class people thought they had secured a safe little income by investing their savings in the Liberator Building Society and its allied companies. In 1892 they lost them all, showing that their hopes were ill-grounded or fallacious.<sup>11</sup>

(5) Christians of all sects used to be taught a doctrine

of the Fall and Atonement in the form of a simple story. We will quote a modern Roman Catholic version. "No sooner did God create Adam than He bestowed upon him, as head of the whole human family, all the supernatural gifts called *holiness* and *original justice*, to be transmitted, together with human nature itself, to all his children. Unhappily, Adam, by his sin of disobedience, which was also a sin of pride, disbelief and ambition, forfeited, or, more properly speaking, rejected that original justice."<sup>12</sup> The sequel may be told in the words of a well-known hymn. Adam's sin had to be paid for, and Christ took the payment upon himself.

"There was none other good enough  
To pay the price of sin,  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of Heaven and let us in.

"He died that we might be forgiven," etc.

The scholarly divines of to-day reject this account of the matter as it stands.<sup>13</sup> Assuming that the scholarly divines are right, then a logical fallacy was committed by the many people who believed the story quite literally.

(6) In the first half of the seventeenth century there went amongst the natives of North America, to win them to Christ, missionaries who have been described by their historian as Frenchmen of noble birth and gentle nurture, sustained by a quiet enthusiasm. In ones or twos they lived amongst the Indians, amid "the smoke, the vermin, the filthy food, the impossibility of privacy," imbued with "that principle of self-abnegation which is the life of true religion, and which is vital no less to the highest forms of heroism."<sup>14</sup> But the Canadian Indians came to the conclusion that these were cruel and malevolent men, who brought a devastating pestilence on the tribe, and killed its babies by magical incantations. Accordingly they were persecuted and eventually put to death. The Indians, we know, were mistaken—committed some fallacy.

•(7) American growers who made a scientific study

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of the cotton plant concluded that not half so many seedlings should be kept as the Egyptian fellah was used to keep; in other words, that the fellah would increase his crop by spacing the plants more widely. But the fellahin "steadily resisted the well-intentioned efforts of would-be reformers."<sup>15</sup> A few years ago it was found that the method of cultivation traditional with the fellah produced the best possible crops, and American growers increased their own thirty per cent. by adopting it. The peasant was right, after all, and the expert had committed some fallacy.

Before we examine the above cases, a word may be permitted on the attitude of mind essential to a successful study of logical problems.

All considerations have to be put aside other than the logical, and it is necessary to remember that we are not concerned, for the moment, with the ethical bearing of any illustration. The required attitude is not an easy one, because in everyday life people are seldom occupied with the purely logical aspect of a question. They are used to pass moral judgments on everything observed. Many people find it difficult even to think of a concrete case of fallacy without blaming some one in connection with it, or without fancying blame to be attributed. They often appraise action as good or bad, but seldom as logically valid or fallacious.

For the purposes of logic the mind must be inducted with the impersonal interest, the dispassionate passion of a Socrates. Indeed no one presents a more perfect model of the logical spirit. We think him mistaken in identifying evil with ignorance, the morally wrong with the logically fallacious; at all events as logicians we have to accept the contrary theory of the important difference between these two, since it is forced upon us by language, every language coming in time to assign them different names, recording only a felt analogy between their several spheres, as between those of sound and colour,

But the aspect of conduct with which Socrates concerned himself, is the logical aspect, which is our own exclusive concern for the moment.

We are asked to regard human action from the standpoint of unconscious levels of mind; to try to imagine what desires are actually prompting a man, without his knowing it; what aim he is, in fact, unconsciously pursuing.

We have given examples of mistakes, but 'nobody, whether consciously or unconsciously, sets out to make a mistake. All conduct is the *bona fide* pursuit of aims, but those belonging to different levels of mind may be at variance. It is our present purpose to find the effectual but unconscious aim in each case, and not to label it as good or bad; rather to view mankind as did Marcus Aurelius when he wrote, "How cruel it is not to allow men to strive after the things which appear to them to be suitable to their nature and profitable! And yet in a manner thou dost not allow them to do this, when thou art vexed because they do wrong."<sup>16</sup> Vexation argues impatience, and while the logical frame of mind may or may not be emotional, it must be patient.

Dismissing every interest but the logical, let us turn to our cases. First we will note their obvious and indisputable features; looking out at the same time for unconscious tendencies which produce them; next we shall compare them with well-known modes of thought of the modern primitive, so as to gain light on the universal character of these same tendencies.

(1) How is it that the writer of the textbook, and the writer of the article in the *Catholic Encyclopædia*, form opposite conclusions as to the origin of man?

They refer to the same set of facts.

Each looks, for instance, at the fossil series showing how the horse we know is descended from a creature the size of a fox-cub, with three or four toes to each foot. Each discusses the ape-like man's remains discovered in Java; and the resemblance of the human embryo

as it grows to the embryos of a fish, a lizard and a mammal. One views these and similar data as proving conclusively that Man has an animal ancestry; the other as rather tending to prove that he has not. This mutual contradiction, perhaps, cannot be explained at all without reference to unconscious motives. The two writers profess to have the same end in view, the pursuit of scientific truth, but in one case it is supplemented by another aim which remains unconscious—a desire to promote virtue.

The writer of the article has not sufficient faith, perhaps, in the goodness of God, to feel certain that truth and goodness are in harmony, and that God himself might not turn out to be faulty, were everything to be known about his works. Accordingly he lets the Church decide what sort of moral truths Nature is to illustrate, just as the Church of the day used to decide for the Mediæval thinker, or as Wordsworth decided for himself when he wrote of “the spirituality with which I have endeavoured to invest the material universe.”<sup>17</sup>

He discusses the evidence, as he thinks, with an open mind, for several pages, and the discussion is obviously *bona fide*; but a sentence such as the following inserts itself, and lets his unconscious motive appear above the threshold, showing that he has prejudged the very question he professes to be weighing. “The human soul,” says he, “could not have been derived by natural evolution from that of the brute, since it is of a spiritual nature; for which reason we must refer its origin to a creative act on the part of God.”<sup>18</sup>

His prejudgment here is in accordance with the authoritative view of the Church to which he belongs. That view, so far as we are concerned, may be true or false, but the way in which it is arrived at by the writer on this occasion is illogical. For the conclusion is not inferred from the stated premisses. It is, in the background of the mind, accepted on authority. His error in reasoning, then, comes from *reliance upon*

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*authority.* The same error is displayed by the man who is ready to accept the *ipse dixit* of the textbook without further enquiry.

Turning to the present-day savage for a counterpart to this tendency, we find that in all things he relies on authority. For him, what the tribal custom says, is right; whether embodied in the unwritten law of his ancestors, as at first, or, as later, in the word of the medicine-man, priest or king.<sup>19</sup> The old-fashioned picture of the savage as a free and artless child of Nature, unfettered by the trammels of convention and the bonds of law, is nowadays recognised as the reverse of true. Frazer has forcibly and convincingly shown that there was never any one less free than the primitive. He is "a slave to the past, to the spirits of his dead forefathers, who haunt his steps from birth to death and rule him with a rod of iron."<sup>20</sup> In all things he has to do as they did, yielding "a blind, unquestioning obedience" to "the unwritten law." He never supposes that his laws are made by himself and his fellows. He knows no difference between natural and arbitrary law; it is all natural and all arbitrary to him, and his craving for it is insatiable. He does not feel comfortable unless he is sure that what he is doing is thought right and proper by those who understand.

(2) Our second case of fallacy was *Lord Salisbury's argument* that increased opportunity does not increase drunkenness, and we here ask, how did he come to use it? His illustration from the Hatfield housemaids gives the clue. He thinks of them, and rightly, as people of normal health and energy, people like himself, who would do their duty and go on working, whatever facilities offered for repose. He compares their situation, surrounded by seductive chairs, to that of the drunkard surrounded by seductive public-houses. The comparison plainly shows that he regards drunkards, too, as people like himself, who have no craving for alcohol that cannot be kept in check. But the ordinary drunkard is a man



who has a craving for drink, or for that temporary escape from care and restraint which drunkenness occasions; and he would be more appropriately compared with a housemaid recovering from influenza, who would sit the oftener the more chairs stood there to tempt her.

In imagining the drunkard's situation Lord Salisbury's mind was egocentrically poised. He had no lack of opportunity for observing facts, but this set of facts he viewed in the subjective manner characteristic of unconscious levels of mind. His was *the fallacy of self-centredness, or primitive egoism*. If we formulate the reasoning implied, it is perhaps, "*I don't want to drink, so why should other people?*" Absurd as it appears in this form, it is a not infrequent assumption even of statesmen and philosophers, for the fallacy is a favourite with minds of great individual force. The subjective poise, which occasions it, is *characteristic of the primitive*.

When primitive man comes to distinguish people and things clearly from himself he looks upon them as beings like himself. Thus to the savage not only housemaids and drunkards, but beasts and birds, trees and rivers, even stocks and stones, are beings with natures like his own. He never sees how widely dumb animals differ from speaking ones, and it has taken most of the lifetime of the race to find this out, for we read of records of a hundred trials of animals in French courts between 1120 and 1741, when the last death sentence was passed and carried out on a cow.<sup>21</sup>

The savage not only punishes animals for crime, as though they were human, but when he kills them for food, as he is often obliged to do by hunger, he offers them sincere and elaborate apologies.<sup>22</sup>

A vivid glimpse is gained into the mind of the primitive with regard to animals when we read in Frazer of "an unusually intelligent Bushman," who yet "did not know but a buffalo might shoot with bows and arrows as well as a man if it had them."<sup>23</sup> We read that, "when the Russians first landed on one of the Alaskan islands, the

people took them for cuttlefish, on account of the buttons on their clothes " <sup>24</sup>—men or cuttlefish, there wasn't much difference.

(3) Our next example was *Gordon's* unsuccessful attempt to relieve *Khartoum*.

Gordon had all his life achieved the impossible by the overwhelming force of his personality. In early days, as "Chinese Gordon," he inspired the feeble Chinese "regulars" to deeds of valour till they subdued the ferocious Tai-ping rebels. When Governor-General of the Soudan, he frequently imposed submission on his enemies by sheer force of will. On one famous occasion he quelled a rebel army by suddenly riding into their midst clad in golden armour, when supposed to be a hundred miles away. <sup>25</sup>

There were grounds for thinking that he might again impress himself upon his enemies, and either win over the Mahdi's followers, or scatter them with the lightning of his eyes. But that was not what he consciously went to do. He did not himself realise the extent to which he trusted in his personal magnetism, his own "mana." A superstitious streak in his religious faith concealed this primitive trait. He habitually thought of himself, no doubt, as a developed personality through whose character God revealed his. But he tended sometimes to share the savages' view and to see himself as a man "possessed by" God.

His motives were not made clear, nor were those of his supporters in the Cabinet, and it was just for this reason that a mystery surrounded his last and fatal adventure. Had the reasons for sending him to Khartoum been fully conscious, Mr. Gladstone, for one, would not have consented to his mission. On looking back it was seen to be, as Lord Morley says, "little better than calling in a wizard with his magic." <sup>26</sup>

Gordon's fallacy was that of thinking that a man can sometimes gain his object solely by the imposition of will. We may call it *the fallacy of will*. It would

seem to be a relic of the once universal *belief in mana*, which *underlies* the whole of the *primitive's mode of thought*, and supplies, as Frazer has shown, the physical basis of magic.<sup>27</sup> Will-power, inseparable from impulse, is to him a force of the same nature as all force whatever, of one kind with the force of wind and waves, of falling stones and growing plants. That is not to say that these different kinds of force have been recognised as one; they have never been distinguished. Nor has the distinction been made between natural and supernatural. "Every man," says Frazer, "is supposed to be endowed more or less with powers which we should call supernatural."<sup>28</sup>

When the distinction first comes to be made, then those forces which are regular and calculable are regarded as natural, while human will or impulse, being incalculable, remains supernatural.

The primitive thinks that with "mana" enough all things are possible—to change a husband's habits, or to remove mountains. A powerful fetish by its mana can strike a man dead do he but touch it; by his mana, through some simple intermediary object, the medicine-man or king can control the wind, the sea and the rain, sickness and death.<sup>29</sup>

(4) Our fourth example of fallacy was that of investors in the *Liberator group of societies*. No one would have put his savings into these highly-speculative companies had he known them to be managed by a group of fraudulent promoters intent on feathering their own nests, but reckless of their clients' interests. Investors thought they had got hold of a good thing, and it may be surmised that to a large extent the wish was father to the thought. The critical faculty is proverbially blunt where investments are concerned. The natural desire is for a large income and a safe one. A high rate of interest has tempted many thrifty souls to put their savings into gold-mines, just as in mediæval times it led them to finance the alchemist in his search for gold.

In this case it was a safe income rather than a large one which appealed to investors, and they were inclined to regard Jabez Balfour as an authority in matters of finance, because he was known to be well thought of, a support of his borough and his church. In the same way the alchemists used to win their clients' confidence and their own, by devotion to mysticism and morality, interests which obscured the mercenary motive of their transactions.

This blunting of the critical faculty comes, it is suggested, from the partly unconscious character of the desire for wealth. In Christian countries love of money is usually disowned as a motive. Christians are more apt than are Jews, for instance, to repress it into unconsciousness, along with certain hard sayings of their Master concerning riches and the rich man. The average professing Christian puts a low value on riches, in deference to the emphatic teaching of Christ, but unconsciously he estimates them no less highly than does the average Jew. He is spurred by an unconscious desire for wealth which he consciously disowns. It sometimes warps his judgment and leads him to see an investment in roseate hues. His fallacy may be called *the fallacy of the wish*.

To turn to its primitive counterpart, we find it a potent factor in the life of the savage, but still more potent is the complementary *fallacy of the fear*, which leads a man to believe in the actuality of whatever he fears and dreads.

The two great terrors which beset the minds of savages all over the world, says Frazer, are the dread of witches and the dread of evil spirits,<sup>30</sup> often encountered, because feared. "The life of the Boloki," for example (a Congo tribe), "is described as one long-drawn-out fear of what the mingoli may next do to them," the "mingoli" being the "disembodied souls of the dead."<sup>31</sup> Nothing will induce one of the Boloki to enter a forest at night on this account.

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Or, to take another example, certain Eskimos greedily swallowed all the new taboos brought by the missionary for fear lest the foreigner's God should revenge himself if slighted. • "A wise man" with them means "a man who knows a large number of taboos," and so avoids the penalty of breaking them. They died of starvation rather than leave their boats out on the Christian Sabbath, and they reported their pastor to his superiors for his slackness in the matter.<sup>32</sup>

Another example of the fear being father to the thought is seen in primitive terror of the mana of any chief, which makes it dangerous to touch his person or his belongings, no matter how innocently. Thus a Maori slave ate the remains of a chief's dinner without knowing. When he learned what he had done, the mana killed him. He was a strong man, but it gave him cramp in the stomach.<sup>33</sup>

Primitive people who touch their kings inadvertently, find that the unlucky action produces the result feared, though in this case they may be restored to health if the king allow himself to be touched again, or withdraw his mana by touching them.

(5) Our fifth example was from the realm of theology, *the story of the Atonement* in its old-fashioned form, once widely believed as literally true.

The story describes a situation which all can understand. We hear it in infancy and are grateful to a God who stopped short at no sacrifice to save us from the terrible punishment which we know only too well that we deserve. In clear and striking outline it embodies certain deep and simple feelings universal to the human heart, a sense of guilt, a longing for salvation, and a conviction of the limitless love of God towards his children. These doubts and fears, hopes and longings, are "past the mind of man to conceive"; and yet they crave expression, so that we eagerly clutch at anything simple and comprehensible which at any rate partly expresses them. In childhood we accept the story

without criticism. In later life, unless unusually conscientious, we are glad to have something to tell the children which their childish minds can grasp, and which may help to make them good.

But the story is felt nowadays to conflict with certain fundamental moral convictions which have become explicit, such as the feeling of individual, as distinct from group, responsibility,<sup>34</sup> and of belief in the infinite justice of God. By those who still take Genesis literally, the part played in it by God the Father is felt to need apology. The writer quoted above defends it by an appeal to the rights of private ownership. "It is evident," says he, if we complain of God's injustice, that "there is no just ground for complaint; for God, being Master of His gifts and of His creatures, has a right to choose the mode whereby to communicate those gifts to them."<sup>35</sup> In other words, he may do what he likes with his own.

The doctrine, then, which expressed our forefathers' love of goodness, outrages that of our children. If we accept it we succumb to *the fallacy of the simple and striking*. We cannot put the thing simply without putting it falsely, so we put it falsely, to save ourselves the trouble of thinking clearly, or the pain of hesitation. We hardly realise our own distaste for mental exertion, our terror of doubt, or know that we are ready to accept any strikingly simple explanation just because it is so restful to the mind to meet with something it can easily grasp. Love of truth pulls one way, love of mental ease another. No one would openly admit that his ground for believing a certain statement or theory was that it was easy to understand, or that it filled an aching void and saved the trouble of thinking. The fallacy exhibits a blend of intellectual curiosity and sloth which is still easier to detect *in the primitive*.

The savage (like the child) wants a reason for everything, but it must be one he can understand. Why does the sun disappear? Because a monster swallows

it up. Why do we treasure these bull-roarers? Because our ancestors used to carry them about in the dream-times. Why must I fast while my elders feast? Because if you don't you will offend the spirits.<sup>36</sup> Why do I feel so funny? Because spirits or demons have got into you. Why is the rainbow in the sky? Because God puts it there to show that he will keep his promise and not drown the world again.

(6) Our next example was of the *Canadian Indians* and their *missionaries*. The French Fathers were unlike any men whom the Indians had encountered. They pursued a ceaseless quest for dying children, penetrating every house in turn, and, whenever they were not closely watched, putting the baptismal spell upon the sufferer. What was their object? They declared that their charm was a lucky one, which snatched the child's spirit from the fangs of the Great Wolf. This sounded probable, and at first the Indians had believed it, and came in large numbers to be baptised. But now the pestilence had smitten them, and pestilence was not the work of good magic, but of bad, black magic, instigated by hatred. It was natural for people of different races to hate each other, indeed they always did. The Indian could understand strangers wishing to destroy his people, and he could understand them working charms, as did his own witches, but he had no experience of a pure, disinterested love of souls which in this case led to "nimble-fingered adroitness" in baptising.<sup>37</sup> *The fallacy was one of limited experience.*

The Indians' persecution of the Fathers was perhaps not a fallacy at all from their own point of view, but a consciously based and well-reasoned measure, appropriate to their stage of mental development. In their unconscious minds, however, simmered conflicting but undeveloped motives, destined to emerge and to make their past conduct seem illogical to themselves; unrecognised feelings that wicked men do not live as did these men, and that there are more reasons for

muttering over babies than were dreamt of in Indian philosophy.

Limited experience may lead the wisest of *primitives* to mistakes which are striking to us because our own experience would have taught us to avoid them. For instance, the black man has an instinctive dread, we are told, of anything new,<sup>38</sup> but once he has overcome this dread towards the white man, he takes him for a beneficent being and places implicit trust in him.<sup>39</sup> Treated cruelly, as he sometimes is by the trader, he expects the missionary, who follows, to shoot, flog, fine and cheat him, and hence he is hostile.

"The African idea of the white man," says one of these missionaries, "is that he is a devil, and it takes a good deal of intimate association . . . before he begins to feel that a white man *can* be a brother."<sup>40</sup>

(7) Our seventh fallacy is that of the *scientific cotton-grower* who proves that the intuitive method pursued by the fellah is wrong, though all the time it is right.

The cotton expert has conducted experiments and reached the conclusion that the most prolific plants are obtained by allowing each so much space in which to grow. But in laying stress on size he has underestimated the importance of number. The fellah's method produced a large number of smaller plants, and a larger total yield. Directly the expert becomes aware of his oversight he corrects it, but he is more prone than other men to omit some factors and lay undue stress on others, because of a sort of intellectual cocksureness which comes from his special knowledge of the subject.

This may be called *the scientific fallacy* par excellence. No doubt the primitive has his own forms of it, but, unlike the other fallacies noticed, it is more strikingly exhibited amongst ourselves, as a by-product of advancing knowledge.

Any one familiar with modern works on anthropology



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will be struck by the close parallel between the fallacious tendencies we have noticed and certain well-known features of primitive thought. When an educated man commits a logical fallacy, he is "just like the savages."

We will now turn to primitive thought, to enquire what other notorious features are there displayed, and coming back to our own time and country, look for their up-to-date counterparts to supply us with our remaining types.

(8) Primitive man is apt to credit *the marvellous*, to believe in the objective reality of whatever attracts his attention by its strangeness. Familiarity breeds contempt and boredom, and that only seems to him marvellous which he does not see all around him and every day, that which makes demands upon his powers of believing. Like the White Queen in *Through the Looking-Glass* he is very good at believing. The more extraordinary the tales the traveller brings back, the more greedily are they swallowed. Throughout the Middle Ages, men were more ready to believe that the natives of Central Africa were "wonderly shapen," with their heads below their shoulders, or with eyes in the middle of their foreheads, than that they were ordinary humdrum mortals.<sup>41</sup>

They went on believing that the lion's cub is born dead and brought to life by the cries of its father, just because it would be so very wonderful.<sup>42</sup>

We recognise this tendency *in modern times*, still leading to false inferences from facts of observation, as, for instance, to a belief in ghosts, and in a material response to prayer; to the yearly marvels of the "silly season," and the general delight in miracles of sorts, from the levitated table to the bleeding oleograph. It partly accounts for the significance attached to cryptic prophecy, whether in *Old Moore's Almanac* or the Book of Revelation. Led by the fallacy of the marvellous a man is inclined to believe in whatever strikes him as marvellous, or even uncanny; but as soon as he becomes

conscious of the tendency, he ceases to make this particular kind of mistake. He is then just as ready to believe in the reality of the Angels of Mons as in that of Joan of Arc's voices. Both come to have a minor and rather technical interest for him. If he belongs to the company of "the faithful," his faith is no longer based on miracles, so that the question of their precise nature seems one of interest only to experts, since nothing hangs on it. A love of the marvellous unrecognised by himself blunts a man's critical faculty and makes him credulous, but brought into consciousness, it feeds in other and richer pastures.<sup>43</sup>

(9) Another well-recognised trait of the primitive is his *suggestibility*, his tendency to believe or to do whatever is suggested to him.

The tendency reaches an extreme in hysterical diseases such as Arctic "Amürakh," and Melanesian "Lâtah."<sup>44</sup> An infirm old native woman was seen to seize a salmon in her teeth and run with it uphill because she saw a Cossack near her perform this strange and striking action.<sup>45</sup>

Sir Hugh Clifford tells of his Melanesian cook repeatedly putting his fingers in the fire at the suggestion of an impish little boy.<sup>46</sup> "A lâtah person," says this writer, "will mimic the swaying motion of wind-shaken boughs just as readily as the actions of a human being."<sup>47</sup>

*Turning to ourselves* we find plenty of instances in which we do things merely because we share this primitive suggestibility. We vote for Smith or Brown, we buy Sapolio, and we adopt the latest fashion, because it has been frequently or strikingly suggested to us to do so.<sup>48</sup> As with the last fallacy, the habit is dropped as soon as it is made conscious. Some people fall into an inverted form of the error, and assert the independence of their judgment by "always contradicting." Contradiction is a defence against a latent capacity for doing and thinking things merely because they are expected of us. People who are always contradicting, in their unconscious

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minds feel excessively pliable, prone to adopt any ideas that are suggested, and to find themselves acting against their own considered judgment. Rebellion is a stage between slavery and freedom; and the tyranny of a man's unconscious tendencies over himself, is one against which he is apt to rebel with heat and violence, since he seems to be combating a magic or mesmeric force.

Lastly we must take account of *primitive magic*, the notion that things affect each other by a secret sympathy, much as human beings influence each other.

When this notion is reflectively considered it can be formulated as Frazer has shown in the "law of similarity" and "law of contact,"<sup>49</sup> the supposed natural laws that "like produces like," and that "things which have touched one another continue to have an effect on one another."

There is plenty in nature to support these generalisations, which are implicitly made. The savage is particularly suggestible, and he finds that a sad face makes him mournful, the sight of any one who is ill makes him feel poorly, while the presence of an energetic, active person makes him able to bustle about. He finds, too, that chalk whitens all that it touches, black dirt makes things black, a hot stone makes them hot, and so forth. Many objects convey their influence by mere contact; thus a magnet passes on its power of attraction, a firebrand its flame, and a pungent root its pungency.

He implicitly infers a like connection in other cases. Not only is disease catching, he thinks, but life itself, and strength; weakness and death. Thus, contact with women may infect men with their weakness, and must be avoided by one about to fight.<sup>50</sup> A dead man's bones will bring death to all they touch, and if skilfully handled may blind a husband to his wife's peccadilloes.<sup>51</sup> But the main pre-occupation of the primitive is with fertility, the fertility of the soil, his flocks, his herds

and his wives. On these depend his life and that of the group, so that his devices to secure them fill volumes.<sup>52</sup> Every year he brings about a renewal of vegetation by suggestively imitating it, and sets the forces of Nature in motion, as has been said, by the mystic influence of his little drama.<sup>53</sup>

At a later epoch these implied assumptions become rational hypotheses. Perhaps the last to be seriously believed is the "doctrine of signatures," which in medicine long outlived its day. This was the theory that every natural object plainly bears the sign of what it is intended to cure. Poppy heads resemble the human head, a sign that they cure headache; eye-bright is like an eye, a resemblance which shows that it is good for eye complaints; turmeric is yellow, and thereby we may know its efficacy in cases of jaundice.<sup>54</sup>

Education has brought these theories into discredit *amongst ourselves*, but they linger in the realms of quack medicine and religiosity, and are always liable to crop up. Education, moreover, is not universal in the British Empire, so that belief in magic, needs to be seriously reckoned with. Indeed, Prof. Frazer is of opinion that "the primitive Aryan in all that regards his mental fibre and texture is not extinct. . . . In his inmost beliefs the peasant is what his forefathers were in the days when forest trees still grew and squirrels played on the ground where Rome and London now stand."<sup>55</sup> One may certainly find many crude superstitions without going beyond the metropolis; for instance, the commonly felt pride in being without a bodily blemish, and therefore "pure," and the lingering belief in "occult qualities." The description of these given by John Wesley in his *Natural Philosophy* would still find people to endorse it.<sup>56</sup> "Among these is usually ranked that *Sympathy* which is observed in things distant from each other. So Onions in the Granary sprout, while others sprout in the Garden. So nothing is more common, than if you throw a Mulberry or Strawberry at a Woman

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with Child, the Child has the Mark of the one or the other, on the same Part which was struck with it. And these Marks grow Green, Yellow and Red every Year, just as those fruits do in the Garden. And when the Season of them is past, these subside and vanish away."

The proneness of the uneducated mind to fallacy of most kinds provides an argument against democracy, and one which Mr. Asquith was used to apply to the question of Votes for Women. The affairs of the nation will be best conducted by the relatively educated, who are less liable in their reasoning to fall into primitive errors.

The same set of facts, however, supplies an argument for democracy. No normal human mind nowadays need be primitive. None will be, when there is "equal opportunity" for education, to every one born in our commonwealth. The ruling classes and races have not provided it; the masses and the backward races must secure it for themselves.

We will close the chapter with a list of the fallacies enumerated, for more convenient reference. Perhaps one or another of them will seem to the reader the most fundamental, according to his own unconscious bias. Though in fact they may be always blended, and perhaps are reducible to sub-headings of a few salient types, they are at least distinct enough for separate consideration.

(1) *The Fallacy of Authority*.—A tendency to accept "authority" instead of forming independent judgments.

(2) *The Fallacy of Self-centredness*.—A tendency to primitive egotism, or imaginative self-centredness.

(3) *The Fallacy of Will*.—A tendency to think that one can gain one's object by the mere imposition of one's will.

(4) *The Fallacy of the Wish and the Fear*.—A tendency to believe in the existence of that which one desires, to which may be added the complementary tendency to believe in the existence of that which one fears or dreads

(5) *The Fallacy of the Simple and Striking*.—A tendency to accept a thing as true because it is simple and striking.

(6) *The Fallacy of Limited Experience*.—A tendency to draw conclusions from too limited an experience.

(7) *The Scientific Fallacy*.—A tendency to overlook certain factors in the scientific pursuit of other factors.

(8) *The Fallacy of the Marvellous*.—A tendency to believe a thing is true because it is marvellous.\*

(9) *The Fallacy of Suggestibility*.—A tendency to believe or to do whatever has been forcibly suggested.

(10) *The Fallacy of Magic Influence*.—A tendency to believe that things influence each other by a secret sympathy.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

<sup>1</sup> See *The Mind of Primitive Man*, Franz Boas, 1911, pp. 114, 203.

<sup>2</sup> *The Magic Art*, 1913, 3rd ed., I., Preface, xii.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of the Geolog. Soc. of London*, 1907, p. 227.

<sup>4</sup> See *The Antiquity of Man*, by Arthur Keith, 1915, p. 510.

<sup>5</sup> See L. T. Hobbhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, 1901, pp. 401-3.

<sup>6</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 53; *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, pp. 420 1; *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, II. 202. See also Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, I., p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> J. A. Thomson, *Darwinism and Human Life*, 1909, p. 28.

<sup>8</sup> *Evolution*, Thomson and Geddes, Homo University Library, p. 101.

<sup>9</sup> Article on "Evolution," p. 670, of *Catholic Encyclopædia*, 1909.

<sup>10</sup> Lord Granville wrote to Gladstone at the time: "If Gordon says he believes he could, by personal influence, excite the tribes to escort the Khartoum garrison and inhabitants to Suakin, a little pressure on Baring might be advisable," and Gladstone agreed. Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, 1903, III. 150.

<sup>11</sup> See *Times*, Dec. 19, 1892.

<sup>12</sup> *A Short and Simple Exposition of Catholic Doctrine*, by the Very Rev. J. Faa. Di Bruno, 17th ed., pp. 329-30.

<sup>13</sup> See, e. g. *The Gospel of the Atonement*, by Ven. Jas. M. Wilson, and *Atonement and Progress*, Newton H. Marshall, 1908.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Parkman, *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century*, 1894, pp. 87, 105, 109.

<sup>15</sup> *The Exploitation of Plants*, 1917, Prof. F. W. Oliver and others, p. 90.

<sup>16</sup> *Marcus Aurelius*, VI 27, Long's translation.

<sup>17</sup> *Memoirs*, 1851, II. 416.

<sup>18</sup> *Catholic Encyclopædia*, p. 655.

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- <sup>19</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 217.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>21</sup> For a list of these trials see *Credulities Past and Present*, Wm. Jones, F.S.A., 1880, p. 303. See also E. P. Evans, *The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals*, 1906 (Heinemann);\* G. G. Coulton, *Medieval Garner*, 1910, p.\*678; Frazer, *The Magic Art*, I. 45 (3rd ed.).
- <sup>22</sup> Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, 3rd ed., II. 208.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, II. 206.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>25</sup> On Sept. 2, 1877. See *Gordon in Central Africa*, G. Birkbeck Hill, 1899, p. 271.
- <sup>26</sup> Gladstone, III. 151.
- <sup>27</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 339, ftn. 1.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, I. 373.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, I. chaps. V., VI.
- <sup>30</sup> *The Scapegoat*, 3rd ed., 1913, p. 77, ftn. 2.
- <sup>31</sup> Frazer, *ibid.*, quoting Rev. J. H. Weeks, *Anthropological Notes on the Bangala of the Upper Congo*.
- <sup>32</sup> V. Stefansson, *My Life with the Eskimo*, 1913, pp. 91-2.
- <sup>33</sup> Frazer, *Taboo, etc.*, 3rd ed., pp. 134-5.
- <sup>34</sup> Which is later perhaps than many of the psalms in which "I" is the collective "I." See C. G. Montefiore on the Psalms in *The Bible for Home Reading*, 1899, II. 490.
- <sup>35</sup> *Catholic Belief*, 17th ed., by Very Rev. J. Faa. Di Bruno, p. 333.
- <sup>36</sup> Spencor and Gillen, *Across Australia*, 1912, II. 255-6, 265.
- <sup>37</sup> See Francis Parkman, *The Jesuits in North America, etc.*, 1894, pp. 116, etc.
- <sup>38</sup> Frazer, *Taboo, etc.*, p. 230.
- <sup>39</sup> Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, I. p. 128.
- <sup>40</sup> Mrs. H. G. Guinness, *The New World of Central Africa*, 1890, p. 440. Cf. *How I Found Livingstone*, H. M. Stanley, 1872, p.490.
- <sup>41</sup> See, e. g. *Medieval Lore*, ed. Robert Steele, 1893, pp. 74-5.
- <sup>42</sup> See thirteenth-century Bestiary given in R. Morris' *Old English Miscellany*.
- <sup>43</sup> This appears to us to be one of the truths that was forcibly taught by the poet Blake.
- <sup>44</sup> See M. A. Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia*, 1914, pp. 315 seq.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 312.
- <sup>46</sup> *Studies in Brown Humanity*, 1898, p. 191.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.
- <sup>48</sup> Cf. Graham Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics*, 1908.
- <sup>49</sup> *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 52-53.
- <sup>50</sup> Frazer, *Taboo, etc.*, 3rd ed., p. 164.
- <sup>51</sup> *The Magic Art*, I. 149.
- <sup>52</sup> Frazer's *Golden Bough*, throughout, e. g. *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., II. 97.
- <sup>53</sup> *The Dying God*, 3rd ed., pp. 266-7.
- <sup>54</sup> Dr. J. A. Paris, *Pharmacologia*, 9th ed., 1843, p. 47.
- <sup>55</sup> *The Magic Art*, 1913, I., Preface, xii. See also *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, II. p. 202.
- <sup>56</sup> Published 1770, II. 191, § 10.

## CHAPTER IX

### FALLACIES CLASSIFIED

“For a man’s a man for a’ that,” and however sensuous and rude his consciousness of himself and the world may be, it is, after all, a rational consciousness, and it claims the royal right of reason to have its errors disproved out of itself.—EDWARD CAIRD.

EACH kind of fallacy has its corresponding inverted form, which it assumes in minds of a negative type. This, as we have seen, is easily recognised in the case of “suggestibility.” To suggest a thing to any one of a negative type of mind produces a contrary effect. The reaction may seem to be immediate, but it is defensive, and hence not truly immediate. The panic fear of an error leads to the opposite error. One who is afraid of facile agreement may automatically contradict; one who fears his own credulity may refuse to believe anything; one who is afraid of being self-centred may leave self entirely out of the picture.

We have seen that the first six fallacies exhibit ways of looking at the world which, though primitive survivals, yet have great influence on social and individual conduct. The seventh is modern, the by-product of advanced reasoning. The last three have ceased to be grave dangers in countries where universal elementary education obtains; but even there they occur sporadically, and are still common with the illiterate of whatever race or colour.

We will now take each type in turn, glance at its



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origin in the race and the individual; notice a measure of truth embodied in it which explains its existence; and lastly, give examples of its occurrence in present-day thought.

### I.—THE FALLACY OF AUTHORITY

This is true,		So-and-so believes it,
or	because	or
This is the thing to do.		So-and-so does it.

*The origin of this fallacy* is the primitive tendency to obey, seen in the child's relation to its parents, and the savage's to his chief. For individuals and communities at an early stage of their development this attitude of mind may be enlightened.

The earliest display of unquestioning obedience is that of the group to the decrees of its forefathers.<sup>1</sup> Such obedience helps to give the group cohesion. A great stride towards civilisation is taken when obedience is shifted from the spirits of the dead and is given to a living man, in his double character of king and god. "It is hardly too much to say that at this early epoch despotism is the best friend of humanity, and, paradoxical as it may sound, of liberty."<sup>2</sup> With the focus of obedience thus shifted, the group is not only kept together by its unquestioning obedience, but is organised for war and for industry.

Unquestioning submission to authority constitutes a fallacy when it survives its uses, which are then turned into abuses. It may be seen in the individual, whenever the habit of obedience is retained after the child has become a man able to "put away childish things"; and in the race whenever political despotism or religious theocracy continue, although the people have developed sufficient social intelligence for a constitutional form of government, and a religion of the spirit. There are individuals habitually trammelled by authority, even in their private judgments, to such an extent that they cannot see the beauty of a character, or of a piece of

music, till they are told in print that these exist. "The rose by any other name will smell as sweet," but where king and priest combine to call it thistle, few praise its fragrance.

## SUB-DIVISIONS OF "AUTHORITY"

### (a) THE FALLACY OF OUTER AUTHORITY

This is true,		Mother or Father,	
or	because	Teacher,	says so.
the thing to do,	e.g.	Church or Tradition	

### (b) THE FALLACY OF INNER AUTHORITY

This is true,		Intuition,	
or	because	Inner Conviction,	
the thing to do,	e.g.	Anything which	says so.
		"transcends Reason"	

## EXAMPLES OF (a) THE FALLACY OF OUTER AUTHORITY

Class of Examples (i): *The Argument from Age and Experience*.—"When you have lived as long as I have," or "as long as So-and-so," or "when you know as much as I do," or "as much as So-and-so," you will agree with me. This is a favourite argument of age to youth, and of the educated to the ignorant, the travelled to the stay-at-home. It is ultimately reducible to "I, I only am right," for it is I who decide which of the conflicting "authorities" is supreme. Obviously if one person be born later than another, he never can have lived so long, while two people can never have had exactly the same experience.

### (a) "OUTER AUTHORITY" (contd.)

Class of Examples (ii): *The Argument from Orthodoxy*, that the orthodox opinion must be the true one. This is ultimately reducible to "My doxy is orthodoxy." It is the grand argument of orthodox religions and schools of thought against heresy and innovations. Its inverted form is conspicuous to-day. "This cannot be true because it is orthodox," or "This must be true

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because it is a heresy, or new." Originally heresy, like treason, is detested because it threatens the cohesion, and hence the very existence, of the group (church or state or whatever it may be) which is banded together by unity of opinion.<sup>3</sup> When these critical days have passed, a glamour still attaches to orthodoxy or to heresy, according to the type of mind confronting it. To each, the one or the other makes a special appeal. Logically, of course, when estimating the truth of an opinion, considerations of orthodoxy are beside the point.

### EXAMPLES OF (b) THE FALLACY OF INNER AUTHORITY

Class of Examples (i): *The Argument from God's Will, or from Natural Law*.—In its most familiar form this is, "You cannot have what you desire, because it is contrary to the will of God, or contrary to a law of Nature."

It is the grand argument, opposed at all times by the privileged to the demands of the disinherited, by the Haves to the Have-Nots, the upholders of things-as-they-are to would-be reformers.

*Remarks*: The truth underlying this fallacy is the limit to man's power of changing his environment. This limit is realised first as incapacity to prevail against the Will of God, later as incapacity to modify a law of Nature.

The notion of Necessity, first derived from hard, unalterable facts, is later applied to facts which we wish to be hard and unalterable, because they are convenient to ourselves. If we feel a change to be undesirable on one ground or another, we are apt to think that such a change is against a law of Nature. In making this mistake we relapse into a primitive state of mind, a failure to discriminate between the self, whose actions are controllable, and external forces, which are not. The motives which militate against

reform are largely unconscious motives, not brought into the sphere of reason or under the control of the will, hence they appear to us (as did all his impulses to the primitive) as beyond the power of control, inevitable, supernatural, divine, or nowadays as indicating a law of Nature. Not only earthquakes and thunderstorms are thought of as Nature with a capital N, but unconsciously we class our own desires in the same category. They appear to be forces outside ourselves controlling the destinies of our neighbour. It is not realised that conscious rational and ethical purposes are no whit less a part of Nature than are unconscious impulses and instincts; and that if we choose to alter our conditions, and to determine our destinies, it is Nature, acting in and through rational and ethical beings, who alters and determines them.

It is the baser motives, as a rule, which get most repressed; consequently it is they, along with the more primitive motives, good and bad alike, which gain the support of "the argument from Nature"; a support thus lent to the combined inclinations of a man's worse and his less-developed self, against those of his higher nature.

(b) "INNER AUTHORITY" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (i) *contd.*: In one of his books Mr. Carnegie wrote as follows of modern industrial development (*italics ours*)—

"The employees become more like human machines, as it were, to the employer, and the employer becomes almost a myth to his men. *From every point of view this is a most regrettable result, yet it is one for which I see no remedy. The free play of economic laws is forcing the manufacture of all articles*" into this most regrettable mould.<sup>4</sup> Again he says, "*Under the law of competition, the employer of thousands is forced into the strictest economies, among which the rates paid to labour figure prominently.*"<sup>5</sup>

Thus in Mr. Carnegie's eyes it was his own philanthropy, his own tastes and interests, which made him generous with libraries; but it was a law of Nature which made him "near" with wages. The motive prompting that particular economy was largely unconscious, or he could not have regarded it so fatalistically.

While the selfish acquisitive instinct is deified as "Nature," sloth and self-indulgence receive the homage of their devotees as "Providence." It was said of certain Southern farmers that "When a poor man sees his only horse or cow die of exposure or neglect, he accepts the result of his own indolence as a mysterious dispensation of Providence, an occurrence for which he is in no degree responsible." <sup>6</sup>

(b) "INNER AUTHORITY" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *The Argument from Inspiration*.—"God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear." This is the grand argument at all times of individualists against "the herd"; of prophets, seers, quacks, and of every one who believes in the truth of his own vision or intuition, and who sees things differently from ordinary people.

*Remarks*: Its basis of truth lies in the fact that inner conviction is one of two ultimate tests of the truth of anything. The other is whether the surmised truth is in harmony with the rest of truth as known. The argument has often been used in support of doctrines which would bear this second test, as well as of doctrines that would not. Creators of sects and schisms, leaders of passing vogues and fanatical extravagances, have appealed to inner conviction no less sincerely than have the preachers of great messages and the founders of the world's religions. Unsupported by other reasons it is always irrational.

(b) "INNER AUTHORITY" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii) *contd.* : A typical example is to be seen in Wovoka, the Messiah of the Paiute Indians, who founded the Ghost-dance Religion in the 'eighties. Mr. James Mooney, who interviewed him, reported as follows : "He does claim to be a prophet who has received a divine revelation. . . . He made no argument and advanced no proofs, but said simply that he had been with God, as though the statement no more admitted of controversy than the proposition that 2 and 2 are 4." After visiting Heaven, Wovoka brought back a message to his people that they must love one another, and live in peace with the whites. He offered, if he were given "a small regular stipend" by the American Government, to supply the latest news from Heaven and to furnish rain when needed.<sup>7</sup>

The fallacy is met with to-day amongst the holy men of India—the Jaina, or Yoghi, or Guru. It has been said of the Indian holy man that "he knows because he knows. By the devout, information derived from these persons is accepted as readily as we should accept information about radium from a qualified scientific man. The most confident of all that the information is true is he who gives it."<sup>8</sup>

*Remarks* : It may be remarked in passing that inspired information of this sort always tallies with the scientific knowledge of its author. The subtle senses would seem to be reminiscent rather than prospective.

## II.—THE FALLACY OF SELF-CENTREDNESS

The fact or situation is                      because      That is how I see it.  
    actually thus

*The origin of this fallacy*, and its underlying usefulness, is found in the egotistic poise of mind with which Man starts life, and which aids self-development at an

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early stage. Speaking of such a primitive egocentricity Mr. Crawley says—

“Ultimately this subjectivity of mind resolves itself into the sensitive instinct of egoism, the prime factor in human action, which insulates the individual, originally for self-preservation, from others,”<sup>9</sup> and we may add for his development as an individual in distinction from his development as a member of a group.

The individual and the race, in the course of their growth, gradually shift their attitude towards external things, and come to regard other individuals and other races as having each a point of view of its own.

### SUB-DIVISIONS OF SELF-CENTREDNESS

#### (a) THE FALLACY OF ANTHROPOMORPHISM

This thing is of such and such a character	because	If it were a man like me it would be of such and such a character.
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#### (b) THE FALLACY OF SUBJECTIVE SYMBOLISM

This thing is of such and such a character	because	It gives expression thus to my feelings.
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#### (c) THE FALLACY OF IGNORING BACKGROUND

This means such and such a thing to others	because	It means it to me.
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### EXAMPLES OF (a) ANTHROPOMORPHISM

Class of Examples (i): *Treating animals like ourselves*; that is to say, not like our animal selves, but like our distinctively human and moral selves; e.g. drawing parables from Nature, morals from purring kittens, and from ants, and bees, which rest upon their supposed benevolence and civic virtues. The camera is fast changing this egotistic view of beasts and birds for a more truly sympathetic one.

*Remarks*: As always, a measure of truth underlies this fallacy. There is a level at which animals are like ourselves. As fellow-animals we understand one another. Wild beasts show sympathy and under-

standing of a direct kind to the child and to the hermit. "Wherever there are solitaries," says a writer who has studied the lives of hermits, "there are friendships between the recluse and the wild beast. The point of *madness* (among hermits) would have been reached more often but for the charity of the stag and the wild boar and the lion and the buffalo, who felt a sort of compassion for the harmless, weak human creatures that came among them, and who were ready to give that response which is the sustaining ichor of life."<sup>10</sup>

Man's kinship with the beasts, and consequent sympathy, is shown in numerous myths of his descent from some animal; while the feeling of innate divinity, not shared with the beasts, is shown in the equally numerous myths of his descent from God, or of his direct creation by a god.<sup>11</sup>

#### (a) ANTHROPOMORPHISM (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *Misunderstanding the Sufferings of the Brute Creation*.—To this fallacy, we venture to think, are due some of the outstanding features of the insoluble *problem of pain*; the problem of how to reconcile an omnipotent and benevolent God with one who permits pain. All naturally tender-hearted people, like Darwin and Schopenhauer, have found it easier to justify the sufferings of men than of animals. An objective view makes us see those sufferings in a truer perspective, along with their pleasures, and gives a truer notion of the intrinsic quality of each. We realise, for instance, that it is only when they are hungry, or urged by the play instinct, that beasts of prey are dangerous; and that those on whom they prey have no fear of them at other times.

When an animal shows signs of fear, we are apt to think of him as possessing such feelings as accompany similar signs in ourselves; but the signs themselves are automatic actions, *e. g.* palpitation, shortness of breath,



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screams and trembling, and take place independently of the higher brain-centre. Their conscious accompaniments in a highly-developed brain are feelings such as ours. But the feeling of animals, whose brain is of a low type; at any rate, is probably more like our own unconscious feeling, such as accompanies a sneeze rather than a cry of pain, or like that of people who scream when coming to from gas.<sup>12</sup>

### (a) ANTHROPOMORPHISM (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (iii): *Misunderstandings of the Nature of Particular Objects* because of their resemblance to the human form or face. The Mandrake is one of the best known instances.

It is here suggested that the world-wide terror of the dead, amongst primitive peoples, is based on the resemblance of the skull to a mocking and malicious face. Dead people would not have been feared had the untenanted body resolved itself into fragments like a heap of sticks, with colourless associations. Had the skull resembled a mild and benevolent face, the corpse would have been clung to and cherished, so that terror had its biological uses. To keep the ghost at a distance, the dead body, to which it continued to belong, was got rid of in one way or another, by burial, entombment, burning, or the ravages of birds of prey.

### EXAMPLES OF (b) SUBJECTIVE SYMBOLISM

Class of Examples (i): *Symbolic Interpretation of Nature and Allegorical Interpretation of History*.—The first of these has been outgrown in Science, but lingers on in other spheres of thought. We see it in the writings of novelists like Dickens, who depicts his human emotions in natural scenery to match; and we see it where it is less easy to detect, in philosophers like Dr.

Bosanquet, whose faith in the ultimate purpose of the universe might, he thinks, be upset, if a catastrophe such as befell the Roman civilisation were to overtake our own, and London were to be destroyed.<sup>13</sup> Here London would seem to be viewed as a symbol of human progress; it is felt to be incompatible with the inherent fitness of things that it should share the fate of Jerusalem, or that its citizens should all end their lives prematurely, as did so many of the world's greatest heroes.\*

The allegorising tendency continues in histories written for home consumption, even those describing recent events; and in a certain view of the Bible amongst Jews and Christians, which is old-fashioned but not yet extinct. There are people who think that Adam and Eve really lived and did the things narrated, because their story goes home to the heart and expresses some of man's deepest thoughts and emotions about the unsolved problems of life.<sup>14</sup>

(b) "SUBJECTIVE SYMBOLISM" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *The Tendency to See Things around us Symbolically, i. e.* to see them with certain features omitted, or exaggerated, or in some respect changed from the actual fact, because thus modified they better express our own sentiments and desires. "If anything rocks at all," said Dr. Johnson, "they say it rocks like a cradle."<sup>15</sup> Thus we may see every nicely-dressed child as a "pretty innocent," every dog as "a faithful creature," every hungry poor person as some one who will be made happy by a free meal. Similarly we are apt to see one who talks in pious phrases as "a canting hypocrite," and one who makes blunt attacks on widely-detested offences as "a fearless champion of truth." We give a twist to things, to make them more satisfying dramatically to our own emotions.<sup>16</sup>

## EXAMPLES OF (c) IGNORING BACKGROUND

Class of Examples (i): *Inter-racial and Inter-class Misunderstandings*.—"The savage," says Frazer, "does not understand the thoughts of the civilised man, and few civilised men understand the thoughts of the savage."<sup>17</sup> For example, *clothes* mean one thing to the missionary, another to the "native," who puts them against a different mental background. Thus to many of the earlier missionaries, European clothes were a symbol of the higher morality, and as such they were pressed upon reluctant converts. The joke of the situation is stale, but it survives in comic papers. The modern missionary, reared in a more critical atmosphere, tries to persuade his converts to keep their own picturesque costumes; but meanwhile, in some cases, the native's background of associated ideas has changed, and he now worships prosperity in "the religion of the tall hat and frock-coat," insisting upon wearing these symbolic garments.<sup>18</sup>

Another example may be seen in the background of ideas to the family group. "To a black fellow," say Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, "the idea of applying the same term of relationship—nephew or niece"—to the children of a brother and the children of a sister "seems to be the height of stupidity, and from his point of view he is logically right."<sup>19</sup> We are less logical in the distinction we retain between a deceased wife's sister and a deceased husband's brother.

On the whole, perhaps, thanks to missionaries and explorers, more has been done to understand the background of ideas in the minds of some native tribes than has been done at home by one class to understand another. Rich and poor do not know each other's associations. The poor cannot begin to appreciate the rich man's anxiety lest there should be a capital levy; nor can the rich imagine what it really means to the poor to have another penny put on the loaf.

(c) "IGNORING BACKGROUND" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *Unsuitable Political Institutions*.—Sometimes advanced forms of government are thrust upon comparatively primitive peoples, as, for instance, by ourselves in Sierra Leone, where the demoralising effect of our rule is said to be dreaded by neighbouring chiefs; <sup>20</sup> or as in Russia recently by Russian doctrinaires. Sometimes relatively advanced peoples are kept under primitive forms of government, as in the Ireland of to-day, and the Russia of yesterday, where, in the words of M. Rivet, the bureaucracy "formed a sort of steel-hard strait-waistcoat in which a nation was enclosed as in a frame incapable of expansion, in spite of the forward march of time." <sup>21</sup> In Revolutions and their aftermath, the actual cruelty, both of Reactionaries and Revolutionaries, is largely due to this ignorance of background and consequent mutual misunderstanding.

III.—THE FALLACY OF WILL

This is true,	because I will have it so.
or	
This is the thing to do.	

*The origin of this fallacy* lies partly in the truth embodied in the proverb "Where there's a will there's a way," and partly in the indefinite limits of the power attributed to human impulse. The primitive only knows a stronger impulse mastering a weaker, as, for instance, when his desire to conquer his enemies, or to secure a good harvest, inhibits his sexual impulse.<sup>22</sup> He finds that a great many things can be done by exerting sufficient energy of impulse or will, and he believes vaguely that everything conceivable is possible. With savages, says Frazer, "everybody fancies he can influence his fellows or the course of Nature by sympathetic magic," and he who has most mana—as, for instance, a medicine-man or chief—can influence them most.<sup>23</sup>

### SUB-DIVISIONS OF WILL OR "MANA"

### (a) THE FALLACY OF PERSONAL FORCE

**This thing can be done            because    I will it.**

### (b) THE FALLACY OF ENTHUSIASM

**This thing can be done because We have enough enthusiasm.**

### (c) THE FALLACY OF INSISTENCE

**This thing can be done or prevented because I insist upon it.**

### EXAMPLES OF (a) PERSONAL FORCE

“The holy monk,” say the Jaina scriptures, “might reduce millions to ashes by the fire of his wrath.”

Some years ago, a Moslem recluse, sure of his power to tame wild beasts, "deliberately put his arm into the cage of Moti, the tiger in the Lahore Zoological Gardens. The tiger lacerated the arm, and the poor man died in the hospital. . . ." <sup>24</sup>

The mana of John Wesley helps us to understand primitive forms of this fallacy. "Such was the overwhelming influence of the man that those who were not ready to submit to his will and his message were afraid to listen to him." A brother-in-law wrote to him: "Your presence creates an awe, as though you were an inhabitant of another world."<sup>25</sup>

## EXAMPLES OF (b) ENTHUSIASM

**The Children's Crusade is probably one of the most striking examples in history.**

In 1212 about a hundred thousand French and German children set out, in spite of the King's prohibition, to deliver the Holy City and to convert the infidel. They were armed with enthusiasm, and confident that the Lord would divide the waters of the Mediterranean

so that they might pass over dryshod. They sang as they went :

("Lovely are the fields,  
Lovelier still the woods,

In the beauteous Spring;  
Jesus is lovelier,  
Jesus is purer,  
And gladdens our sad heart.")

"Schön sind die Felder,  
Noch schöner sind die  
Wälder,  
In der schönen Frühlingzeit;  
Jesus ist schöner,  
Jesus ist reiner,  
Der unser traurig Herz  
erfreut."

Two detachments crossed the Alps in dwindling numbers, whose battered remnants reached Brindisi and Genoa, thence to disperse. A third detachment arrived at Marseilles, where treacherous merchants shipped five thousand of them to the African slave-market.<sup>26</sup>

In our own day we see the working of the fallacy often enough in the world of philanthropy, where societies arise one after the other under the influence of some enthusiast whose object is to heal the social sore. They fail, partly at any rate, because they rest too exclusively on enthusiasm.

A typical example is seen in the Society of "Friendly Workers," inaugurated by the Lord Mayor of London in March 1894, with a rosy forecast: "If this experiment succeeds, as the Conference and Committee believe it will succeed, then the problem of the poor in London can speedily be solved in detail and as a whole." The cost was to be only £100 a year for each district of about twenty thousand people. In three years' time, however, there were no Friendly Workers left.<sup>27</sup>

#### EXAMPLES OF (c) INSISTENCE

Here the magic of personal force has degenerated to mere obstinacy. The last days of Tsardom in Russia supply a startling illustration.<sup>28</sup> The national inability at a later stage (now happily passed) to realise and cope with stern realities, would seem also a result of the fallacy that a certain attitude of will is all that is required to produce desired results.

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### IV.—THE FALLACY OF THE WISH AND THE FEAR

This is true,		I wish (or fear) it,
or	because	or
This is the thing to do,		I wish (or fear) to do it.

*The origin of this fallacy* lies in the element of expectation, *i.e.* of aroused desire, or fear, which enters into every act of observation. This is coupled with the absence of definite limits to the possible, inevitable to primitive minds. We have already noticed that merely to perceive a thing involves a selection of data to which attention is given, and that we are inclined to attend to whatever pleases or frightens us, and hence are inclined to think it true, whether it be true or a delusion. Primitive man is especially prone to see things merely because he fears to see them, and he does not question the reality of whatever he sees. "Certainty is natural doubt acquired," and it is only at an advanced stage of self-conscious thought that man begins to ask *what kind* of reality it is which corresponds to any particular appearance.

Thus, to quote Frazer, "to the savage the ghosts of dead animals and men, with which his imagination peoples the void, are hardly less real than the solid shapes which the living animals and men present to his senses; and his thought and activities are nearly as much absorbed by the one as by the other." <sup>29</sup> He thinks ghosts are there, because he fears them.

For many people it is the case that to wish for the existence of a thing, or to fear its existence, to a high degree, is to have a measure of belief in its actuality.

### EXAMPLES OF THE WISH AND THE FEAR

Class of Examples (i): *Particular Occurrences*.—The Russian Troops' Myth in 1914. Hundreds of people saw Allied troops pass through the country at a time when their help would have been most welcome. They were influenced by a wish to see them.

On the other hand, the fear of air raids made many people go through the experience of a hostile air raid when there was none. On a certain day the maroon signals were practised in London without warning to the public, and many people who heard the explosions, thought they saw hostile aeroplanes dropping bombs. Detailed accounts passed from mouth to mouth of houses destroyed in a certain street, and people killed in a certain dock.

Both the wish and the fear figure in medicine. Many patients, from Sir Humphrey Davy's well-known case onwards, have found that a clinical thermometer stuck in the mouth eased their symptoms;<sup>30</sup> while in every alarming epidemic fear produces numbers of cases which are all but the real thing.<sup>31</sup>

#### THE WISH AND THE FEAR (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *Religious and Historical Beliefs*.—The legend of Merry England, and the opposite legend that the country is going to the dogs, illustrate the universal tendency to believe in the reality of what is wished or feared. The doctrine of Heaven as a reward for Ourselves and Company, Limited, and of Hell as a punishment for our enemies, is partly the result of this tendency; as is probably every detailed scheme of immortality, and every definite programme for a future life. They reflect the personal wishes or fears of their adherents.

#### THE WISH AND THE FEAR (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (iii): *Facile Optimism*.—Probably the most dangerous form this fallacy assumes, and one which is extremely common, is a careless hopefulness which exonerates people from taking sufficient pains to secure the objects of their desire. Here is a typical example.

An experienced visitor to one of the Southern States



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in 1882 observed extreme poverty and squalor both in the "Negro Cabins" and among the "Poor Whites." Calling on the chief official of the district, to talk things over, he found that Judge Blank had nothing but "eulogy of the town and of the State and of their inhabitants of both races and of all classes. Everything was lovely and perfect and was rapidly improving."<sup>32</sup> An evil which no one desires is apt to be treated as non-existent.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER IX

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 217, and see *The Mind of Primitive Man*, by Prof. Franz Boas, 1911, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, I. 218.

<sup>3</sup> See Miss J. Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, 1915, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *The Empire of Business*, 1902, p. 72.

<sup>5</sup> *The Gospel of Wealth*, 1901, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> "Studies in the South," *Atlantic Monthly*, May 1882, vol. 49, p. 677.

<sup>7</sup> *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1892-3 (Washington), pp. 771-3.

<sup>8</sup> *The Place of Animals in Human Thought*, 1909, Countess Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, p. 181.

<sup>9</sup> A. E. Crawley, "Sexual Taboo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, 1894-5, vol. 24, p. 122.

<sup>10</sup> Countess Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>11</sup> Frazer, *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament*, 1918, I. 29 and 44.

<sup>12</sup> See *Fear*, by Prof. Angelo Mosso, trans. 1896, p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> Pro. Bernard Bosanquet, *Logic*, 2nd ed., 1911, II. footnotes 220.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. much of the current literature of the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>15</sup> Birkbeck Hill's *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, III. 136.

<sup>16</sup> See *supra*, p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed. I. 375.

<sup>18</sup> See Sir H. Johnston, *Liberia*, 1906, I. 354.

<sup>19</sup> *Across Australia*, Spencer and Gillen, 1912, I. 205.

<sup>20</sup> Bp. Ingham, quoted by A. H. Keane, *Man, Past and Present*, 1899, p. 52.

<sup>21</sup> *The Last of the Romanoffs*, 1918, pp. 83-4.

<sup>22</sup> Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., II. 118; *Taboo, etc*, 3rd ed., pp. 163-4.

<sup>23</sup> *The Magic Art*, I. 234.

<sup>24</sup> Countess Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-6.

<sup>25</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, 1905. n. 169.

- <sup>26</sup> *The Children's Crusade*, by Geo. Zabriskie Gray, 1871.  
<sup>27</sup> *Social Work in London*, Helen Bosanquet, 1914, p. 140.  
<sup>28</sup> See *The Last of the Romanoffs*, *op. cit.*  
<sup>29</sup> *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, 3rd ed., I. Preface, vii.  
<sup>30</sup> Dr. J. A. Paris, *Pharmacologia*, 9th ed., 1843, p. 28.  
<sup>31</sup> Prof. Angelo Mosso, *Fear*, trans. 1896, p. 252.  
<sup>32</sup> "Studies in the South," *Atlantic Monthly*, January 1882, vol. 49, p. 82.

## CHAPTER X

### FALLACIES CLASSIFIED (*contd.*)

Stars caught in my branches  
Make day of the dark,  
And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise shall tread out  
their fires as a spark.—SWINBURNE.

#### V.—THE FALLACY OF THE SIMPLE AND STRIKING

*THE origin of this fallacy* lies, as we have seen, in a universal desire to know, coupled with a limited capacity to understand. Without knowledge action falters painfully. In the developed mind, thought itself may be a purposeful action, and its blocking is then as painful as that of any other “balked disposition.”<sup>1</sup>

Thirst for knowledge makes a man wish to understand, while love of mental ease makes him wish to feel as though he understood, and induces him to take short cuts to knowledge. It is as hard to suspend judgment in the interest of truth, as it is to defer any other immediate desire to a far aim, hence a general readiness to accept statements on their face value, as self-evident axioms, or as proved conclusions; or to say with Mr. Brooke of Middlemarch, “I went into all that at one time.” This kind of uncritical acceptance simplifies life for a time, but in the course of the mind’s development it becomes incompatible with sincerity; then, if persisted in, it leads to dissociation between conscious and unconscious spheres. The mind which has the courage of its doubt is led ultimately to that advanced simplicity which we noticed as one of the highest

mental achievements.<sup>2</sup> The imagery of earlier times is then resumed with a full awareness of implications veiled from its authors.

Primitive man states abstract truths in descriptive concrete pictures, or in narratives of the "once upon a time" order, without distinguishing between narration of facts and suggestion of ideas, between historical truth and poetic, scientific truth and religious.

Advanced simplicity, on the other hand, leads to the notice of wide uniformities; in the realm of divinity, for instance, to the idea of the oneness of love, which makes us refuse to believe that a loving God would act as does a vindictive man.

In the realm of history, primitive simplicity produces anecdotes of kings and queens, which express poetic truth and may or may not be historically true. Advanced simplicity leads to the recognition of broad movements, such as the relation of parts within a growing whole, *e. g.* the clash of class interests within the Commonwealth.

The picturesque narrative of early times is apt to be mistaken by succeeding generations. It belongs to a stage of mind in which fact and fancy are not yet distinguished. At a later stage it is sometimes taken as a record of fact; and at a later still as a purely symbolic fiction. Finally, when the fallacy of the simple and striking is outgrown, fact and fancy each receives its due, and the primitive myth is seen all along to have had a distinct and independent value on either count, and one which in each case must be tested by its harmony with the total world of fact, or the total world of idea, to which it has reference.<sup>3</sup>

#### EXAMPLES OF THE FALLACY OF THE SIMPLE AND STRIKING

Class of Examples (i): *Unreal Simplification in Theology*.—This goes hand in hand with dogmatism. It is the fallacy which leads the fool, on the one hand,

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to say "There is no God," and the theologian, on the other, to define him. Heroic lovers of truth have generally admitted, with the Ancient Egyptian hymn-writer, that there is indeed a God, but that "the heart of man is unable to depict him,"<sup>4</sup> or with Job, that when Man comes to speak of God he utters things he understands not—things too wonderful for him, which he knows not.<sup>5</sup> That Sunday School teacher is less enlightened who asks the children: "What is God?"

The fallacy of the simple and striking is a favourite with those shallow thinkers, who, confronted with the deep problems of life, "heal our wounds slightly." Their facile dogmatism led the poet to exclaim—

"Let no man ask thee of anything  
Not yearborn between Spring and Spring." <sup>6</sup>

### THE "SIMPLE AND STRIKING" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *Falsification of History*.—History, for the young especially, abounds in distortion of fact to make it more striking, more arresting, to an immature intelligence. Individuals, classes, and even races, are labelled with their superficial characters; battles are classed as victories or defeats; exceptions are omitted when quoting rules. Two striking specimens of such travesties are seen in the usual accounts of the Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland, and of the French Revolution. The first has been commonly described as bringing civilisation to a "rude and barbarous people," the second as an orgy of anarchy and bloodshed. Nothing is said of the Irish culture, the Irish schools, the Irish trade with Mediterranean countries, which exceeded our own, the Irish missions which brought Christianity to England and to a large part of Europe.<sup>7</sup> So with the French Revolution: little or nothing is said of the legislation of the National Assembly, which perhaps saved the civilisation of Europe.<sup>8</sup>

The particular form given to any fallacious story may

originally be due to political, religious or class prejudice, along with "primitive" self-centredness. We even find history-books in which the Emperors of Ancient Rome are passed in review, labelled and consigned to Hell or Heaven, in the interests of modern English Nonconformity! The mental immaturity of youth makes it prone to accept any tale simply and strikingly told, and the false account learnt in childhood is not questioned later.

### THE "SIMPLE AND STRIKING" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (iii): *Unreal Simplification in other Sciences.*

*Anthropology*.—"In no branch of learning, perhaps," says Frazer, "has this proneness to an attractive but fallacious simplicity wrought more havoc than in the investigation of the early history of mankind."<sup>9</sup> The Solar Myth, and the various theories concerning Totemism, Magic, and Taboo, have each in turn been made to explain everything. But "in science, as in daily life, it is vain to look for one key which will open all locks,"<sup>10</sup> convenient though such an arrangement would be!

*Psycho-Analysis* tries to make its sexual theory do all duties by regarding every impulse as sexual, much as certain Indians regarded men and horses as kinds of pig. Human minds are treated as though they could be classed under a few types, which reacted to life as simply as an amœba reacts to its environment.<sup>11</sup>

Its readers may detect in the present treatise a tendency to make the relation between conscious and unconscious spheres of mind explain everything.

*Economics* has been a byword for that false simplification against which Professor Marshall has always inveighed. A great thinker discovers certain tendencies at work in the world, such as the tendency to buy cheap and to sell dear. Smaller minds seize on this, simplify and dogmatise, till we get a so-called "law" framed, as we have seen, so as to prove whatever suits the pocket of the typical employer.<sup>12</sup> Most of

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the current so-called laws of Economics are untrue, because too simple. The "ca' canny" policy of employees on the one hand, and the "low wages and high profits" policy of employers on the other, are the result of too simple an estimate of the various forces concerned.

### VI.—THE FALLACY OF LIMITED EXPERIENCE

This is true,		Experience teaches us so.
or	because	
This is the thing to do,		

The *origin of this fallacy* is the necessity of assimilating the unknown to the known, coupled with the limited range of any one's environment or experience. It is essentially a primitive fallacy, because wider experience, especially of the history of thought, leads a man to hold his judgments tentatively, with a view to modifying them should new facts warrant. When exhibited by one who has known life in various settings, it argues a defect of imagination, due either to lack of training or to mental weakness.

### " LIMITED EXPERIENCE "

Class of Examples (i) : *Hasty Generalisation*, or generalisation from too narrow observation. As an instance we may take the famous telegram sent by the Government of the day to our Colonies, in the South African War, " Unmounted men preferred ";<sup>13</sup> or the destruction of hedge-sparrows, bull-finches, slow worms, and other friends of the farmer, under the impression that they are his enemies.<sup>14</sup>

The theories of the geologist Werner are typical. Lyell says, he " had not travelled to distant countries; he had merely explored a small portion of Germany, and conceived, and persuaded others to believe, that the whole surface of our planet, and all the mountain chains in the world, were made after the model of his own province,"<sup>15</sup> the neighbourhood of Freyberg.

His tenets, framed on limited experience, were upheld by his followers, under the influence of authority, with an ardour appropriate to articles of faith.

Commonsense arguments against scientific discoveries come under this class, as, for instance, the argument against the discovery that the world is moving round the sun. People felt the earth stationary and saw the sun move. Later on, experience of journeys in a smooth-going express made it less difficult for the ordinary person to believe that "as the earth travels round her orbit she sweeps out a circle more than 180 millions of miles in diameter."<sup>16</sup>

Another striking example of hasty generalisation is seen in a certain type of colony which generally failed, because it was started with ideals and ambitions appropriate to the limited world of the English gentleman. The founders aimed at promoting a higher civilisation, rather than acquiring wealth; their outlook was narrow, but in a different direction from that of the ordinary colonist. One such colony was inaugurated by the author of *Tom Brown*, in a speech in which he spoke of the "aim and hope to plant on these highlands a community of gentlemen and ladies . . . who will live by the labour of their own hands . . . of such strain and culture that they will be able to meet princes in the gate without embarrassment and without self-assertion."<sup>17</sup> In the milieu of the English Public Schoolboy, freedom from snobbishness is a valuable quality, and one which is not his natural inheritance, as it is that of the Malay savage,<sup>18</sup> but an acquired product of education. Therefore its admirers expected it to be useful to him when he tilled the barren soil of Tennessee. But here the primitive instincts of the typical planter were what the circumstances demanded—acquisitiveness tempered by kindness. These would have helped him to "live by the labour of his own hands" more than did a love of God modified by a contempt of vulgarity—qualities ornamental to a privileged class in a settled country,



who can enjoy the fruits of other people's acquisitiveness, while themselves throwing scorn upon the instinct.<sup>19</sup>

"LIMITED EXPERIENCE" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *Inability to Conceive New Developments of Admitted Principles*.—This is the fallacy which notoriously makes a Whig a worse enemy to reform than any out-and-out Tory. It is common in the sphere of politics, but to avoid thorny ground we will give an illustration from the "olden times."

Sir Thomas Smith, writing in 1565 on "The Commonwealth of England," says—

"The nature of our Nation is free, stout, hault, prodigall of life and blood : but contumely, beatings, servitude, and servile torment, and punishment, it will not abide."<sup>20</sup>

This stout and free character of the nation is incompatible in the long run with the political and social status that Sir Thomas Smith describes as being that of "the fourth sort or classe."

"Day labourers, pore husbandmen, yea Marchants or retailers which have no free land, copyholders, and all artificers, as Tailers, Sho-makers, Carpenters, Brick-makers, Bricklayers, Masons, etc. These have no voyce nor authority in our Commonwealth, and no account is made of them, but only to be ruled, and not to rule other, and yet they be not altogether neglected."<sup>21</sup>

He does not see, or at any rate he does not remark on, the inconsistency involved.

VII.—THE SCIENTIFIC FALLACY

This is true,

or

This is the thing to do,

because

A scientific study has been made of the subject.

*The origin of the fallacy*.—The mistakes to which the scientific fallacy leads have a family likeness to those of "limited experience," but that springs from excessive caution, while this comes from *trop de zèle*, coupled with a sense of power at being equipped with scientific methods.

The expert in hot pursuit of some factors, overlooks others which would delay him, or, bent on applying a theory, neglects data which do not tally with it.

It is especially the pitfall of educated youth, of experts and of specialists, and it makes a little knowledge such a dangerous thing when combined with only a little imagination, that we are apt to forget the still greater danger arising from complete ignorance.

#### EXAMPLES OF THE SCIENTIFIC FALLACY

Class of Examples (i): *Practical Mistakes of Experts or Specialists*.—We have an instance in the reclamation of land for tillage on the estuaries of Norfolk, which was directed by scientists. One important result was overlooked. It was not foreseen, as it might have been, that the scouring force of the ebb-tide would be lessened, with the consequence that the harbours would become silted up.<sup>22</sup>

There were plenty of examples in the Great War.

We read, in an article by Sir George Gibb, of a military officer of transport who, "not knowing much about roads, but zealous in his own job," did £30,000 worth of damage through overlooking the peculiar state of the roads, when they were thawing after a long frost.<sup>23</sup>

Again, in the Gallipoli campaign, specialists superintended the despatch from Egypt of vessels laden with supplies for the landing-party. All was arranged admirably, except for one factor, the conditions under which the unpacking would have to be done—under fire. Thus carts were stowed in one vessel, horses that would have to be harnessed to them in another; guns in one, limbers in another, so that the boats had to be sent back, emptied and repacked before the landing could be effected.<sup>24</sup>

The history of the cotton-plant furnishes another example. For more than a century specialists studied the introduction of exotic cottons into India. We are now told that "the whole of their work needs to be repeated *ab initio*. The cotton flower was always

assumed to be self-fertilised, or only very occasionally cross-fertilised " <sup>25</sup>—a mistaken assumption.

Many Acts of Parliament fail more or less in their objects because of the failure of their authors to provide for certain contingencies, not admitted within the purview of their theory. Interest in humanity is not always accompanied by an open mind towards the "little ways" of human beings, as yet unclassified.

The surgeon who performs an operation without considering the condition of the patient's spirits or digestion, provides another case in point.

### "SCIENTIFIC FALLACY" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): *Theoretical Mistakes of Specialists*.—Such are the theories that a man could live on concentrated essence of beef, till it was found that he needed bulk; or that a tuberculous patient could grow fat on food for which he had no appetite, till it was found that "good digestion waits on appetite," but not on doctors' orders.

The "Christ myth" theory of certain German savants is an example of this fallacy. The modern historian, taking the newscientific standpoint, distinguishes between "the historic Jesus"—the man who lived and died—and the Christ of Christian Faith—the symbol of a universal spiritual experience.

The savants in question were so much impressed by the significance of the symbolic Christ, as the most vital element in Christianity, that they altogether denied the actuality of the historic Jesus.<sup>26</sup> Eager to emphasise the truth now brought to light, they overlooked the substratum of truth in the older view.

A similar mistake was made by those critics of the "cosmogony of Genesis" who threw over the Book of Genesis as totally unscientific. But, as Dr. Sanday puts it, to criticise a pre-scientific work from the scientific standpoint at all is fallacious. The mind of the writer of Genesis, in its "effort towards truth," "moved along

the only lines that were possible to it, the lines of pictorial imagination." 27

# VIII.—THE FALLACY OF THE MARVELLOUS

This is true,		
or	because	It is marvellous.
This is the thing to do,		

The *origin of this fallacy* is in the primitive tendency to notice, attend to, and wonder at, what "hits one in the eye," so to speak, by its unusualness.

Primitive man is engrossed in the business of making a living. He notices, admires and adores whatever interests him, and those objects interest him : firstly, which help or hinder him in getting a living, and secondly, which strike him by their unusualness. So long as his living depends upon the mood of some familiar object, no amount of familiarity will breed contempt ; but once he is sure of enough to eat and drink, whatever be the humour of the wind, the oak-tree, or the corn spirit, then those things to which he is accustomed cease to be impressive. To the forest dweller it is the clearing that is marvellous, to the hillman it is the plains. Black men and white, pygmies and giants, are novel to each other, hence startling, and supernatural, devils, or it may be gods or fairies.

The Hindoo finds his own traditional designs commonplace, but is stirred to admiration by the novelty of a Birmingham rug or of a Berlin oleograph. Familiarity, then, is one detractor from that glamour of marvel which invests all objects in the world of the savage and of the child ; and one kind of familiarity accompanies the notion of scientific law, by which the supernatural is transformed into the natural.

Every force in the world to begin with is miraculous, and capricious, like the moods of Man, who has not yet attained to self-control. Thus every human birth is at first ascribed to a miracle, but when a connection comes to be grasped between the birth of a child and the

sexual intercourse of its parents, then those births only remain miraculous which are thought to be produced by other causes, and their number diminishes with the advance of thought. Miraculous births are still common in Syria, Australia and Africa, but have altogether ceased in Western Europe.<sup>28</sup>

As the idea of uniformity extends, certain phenomena come to be defined, classed, and understood, so far as anything can be understood. These for some minds henceforth lose their character of marvellous, which still clings to objects on the outskirts of the sciences. For instance, to our ancestors the force of chemical affinity was miraculous. But when it was found that chemical elements united, not at random, but in fixed proportions, in accordance with natural laws, then their union ceased to appear marvellous. So with fire and water, magnetism and electricity. As the domain of science extends, and reactions can be foretold, the domain of the quasi-marvellous retreats correspondingly.

Science has not yet lighted up the realm of the "electron" nor of electro-magnetic and psycho-magnetic forces, nor of the forces (whatever they may be) which produce spirit-rapping, levitation and materialisation; and to some people these seem marvellous because they are as yet unclassified. Such people would beg us not to banish the supernatural, because along with it would go (so they say) the romance of life. For them familiarity breeds contempt, but they misread the world in the light of their own weakness. They are like Wordsworth's Peter Bell—

"A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more."

A primrose only excites their wonder if it can be shown to have a primrose-spirit interpenetrating its body and unamenable to known laws. Otherwise they get to the end of it at a glance. It stimulates no systems of idea

and emotion, memory and imagination. But there are Peter Bells of another type, whose latent faculty for wonder is aroused when they learn the natural laws shown in the primrose; while perhaps most men need no stimulus of either sort, but are moved to wonder as naturally as was Wordsworth. It is not true that familiarity lessens admiration towards those objects which stir it most deeply. There is, on the contrary, a special romance of the familiar, just because the familiar is inexhaustible—one can never reach its limit if once an objective attitude be adopted.

Mankind sets out on his career worshipping stones of unusual shape,<sup>29</sup> but sooner or later he comes to worship the Mother. The lark and the daisy have not become less marvellous, nor the hills less romantic, because Science has lifted a corner of the veil which hides their mysteries, letting us gaze into an infinity of inter-relation, till we can no longer “stir a flower without troubling of a star.”

The faculty of wonder develops in scope and depth with education. Thousands of people, through lack of education, refuse homage to the lark and the daisy, while marvelling at the Bank Holiday mermaid or the six-toed cat. Others are born defective in the power of wonder, and these may be more enraptured by the materialised flowers of a Blavatsky than by Tennyson’s “flower in the crannied wall,” more moved to admiration by the banal message which his disembodied spirit raps out through a medium, than by the ripe fruit of a man’s literary genius. They are like people whose musical sense or appreciation of colour is undeveloped; who linger, for choice, with primitive melodies, and those only in the minor key, or with vivid pinks and startling blacks, unmindful of the glories of blue and green. In certain directions a developed faculty for wonder is needed for the advance of the race, and these people lag behind the main current of progress. They are still admiring ghosts and miracles, still lingering with the dark and uncanny

marvels of the toad and phoenix, while humanity has passed beyond them, to the admiration of that unreal abstraction "Pure Reason," and has passed beyond that too, and entered the portals of the Palace of Wonder, the abode of Goodness, Truth and Beauty; whence the modern scientist, looking into the sunlight, sees "the face of Nature like the surface of a gentle stream, where hundreds of dimpling circles touch and influence one another in an infinite complexity of action and reaction beyond the ken of the wisest." <sup>30</sup>

#### EXAMPLES OF THE "MARVELLOUS"

Class of Examples (i): *Readiness to make a Nine Days' Wonder out of Anything which Offers Possibilities.*—The childhood of that gifted deaf-mute lady, Miss Helen Keller, is a case in point. Miss Sullivan (who taught her) found herself and her pupil the centre of a stupendous fiction, for "the story of Helen Keller, incredible when told with moderation, had the misfortune to be heralded by exaggerated announcements, and naturally met either an ignorant credulity or an incredulous hostility," <sup>31</sup> that is, with the fallacy or the marvellous, direct or inverted. The one still leads to credulity, the other to scepticism, as when Bishop Wilkins complained that "the same Novelty which is esteemed the Commendation of Error, and makes that acceptable, is counted the fault of Truth, and causes that to be Rejected." <sup>32</sup>

#### "THE MARVELLOUS" (contd.)

Class of Examples (ii): *Readiness to Believe in the Supernatural.*—This includes alacrity in believing reports of supernatural phenomena, and supernatural causes of events, *e. g.* miraculous cures, and strange powers or gifts such as are displayed in Spiritualism, Christian Science, Theosophy, and in every Religion at some time or other. The lesser "wonders" of palmistry, clairvoyance, fortune-telling and marvels of sorts come under this heading.

This fallacy would seem, as a rule, to be blended with others, notably with "suggestibility," "will" and "authority." To take the case of a magnetic personality, which we imagine to be a mind of unusual energy at unconscious levels. Such an one hypnotises unintentionally; his forceful presence stimulates his admirers to obey him instinctively, and he seems to them to perform marvellous actions.

It is, however, noteworthy that even in the ages of extreme credulity very few miracles were attributed during their lifetime to prophets of sane and lofty character, possessing, like St. Francis, a strong sense of relative values. Once dead, however, the popular love of the marvellous had full scope, and gained their relics the credit for many miracles, not all of them characteristic of the saint in question. Thus the miracles attributed to our Lord in the Canonical Gospels were quickly supplemented by later records. The Gospel of Thomas (quoted before the end of the second century) ascribes fifteen miracles to him in his childhood, four of which are deeds of vengeance and cruelty, the rest mere displays of power.

Scoundrels like Rasputin, on the other hand, may be seen, during their lifetime, trading on the popular appetite for the marvellous, and working miracles galore.

*One inverted form of the fallacy* is a quasi-scientific scepticism, formulated in Matthew Arnold's dictum, "miracles do not happen." There are people who assume that "mediums" are all frauds, and that there is no substratum of fact which still awaits elucidation underlying the superstitious belief in ghosts and magic. They impugn the veracity of every witness, and do not see that a uniform unveracity itself needs explanation. They deny the fact itself because they cannot accept its supernatural explanation. Such people would have denied that a cat's fur emitted sparks in frosty weather, so long as those sparks were commonly believed to prove that the cat belonged to a witch.



A view of the Bible which was popular until recent years illustrates the fallacy of the marvellous (as well as others), both in its direct and inverted forms. Believers, as we have seen, made an appeal to authority, but this was fortified by an appeal to the book's marvellous origin. In "the traditional view of the Bible," says Bishop Storr, it was "a volume inspired throughout from cover to cover, whose statements, whether they related to science, or history, or religion, were to be accepted without questioning. . . . Its various books were regarded . . . as having been produced under a divine superintendence which protected them from any material error,"<sup>33</sup> *i. e.* produced miraculously.

The inverted form of this fallacy led some men to throw the Bible over as worthless, until the other day, when "theology became permeated by the historical spirit and the whole conception of revelation changed," so that it came to be "thought of as progressive unfolding of the divine purpose."<sup>34</sup>

#### IX.—THE FALLACY OF SUGGESTIBILITY

This is true,		It has been suggested to
or	because	me.
This is the thing to do,		

*The origin of the fallacy* lies in the normal tendency to respond to any idea by an action. In the mind of the child and the primitive, ideas are not distinguished from facts. Both are reacted to in the same way. Thus, if a loved and trusted father "put on a voice" and contort his features, the child shrinks from him, with a terror that is half real. He knows all the time that it is his father, but he reacts to the idea suggested to him, as he would to the fact. This is the state of mind of the unsophisticated play-goer who tries to keep back the stage villain from his baneful crime.

The fallacy is most marked with primitive peoples, and with individuals of unstable mental balance, who may resemble the primitive in this respect, though not

in others. A Russian explorer describes how the Lapps behave in church if the preacher "speaks too loud or gesticulates too much," thus suggesting to them the idea of violence. "Some fall into insensibility, while others jump up as if mad, rush out of the church, knock down all who oppose them, and even strike their friends and neighbours." <sup>35</sup>

Equally prone to this fallacy are people weakened by illness, hysterics and persons in an hypnotic trance, but no one is exempt from it. The normal man, upon hearing anything forcibly suggested, unconsciously tends to think of it as a fact, and to act in response automatically. A mere word will often suffice to evoke an idea and bring about its corresponding action.

#### SUB-DIVISIONS OF "SUGGESTIBILITY"

##### (a) THE FALLACY OF ADVERTISEMENT

This is true,		It is advertised as true,
or	because	or
This is the thing to do,		It is advertised as the thing to do.

##### (b) THE FALLACY OF THE CROWD

This is true,		A crowd of people say so,
or	because	or
This is the thing to do,		A crowd of people do it.

The success of much advertisement is based on suggestibility, but other fallacious tendencies are often exploited by the advertiser. The formula may be: "This is true, because I have had it suggested to me so often, or so forcibly, or by one whom I regard as an 'authority,' or strikingly and in a marvellous manner." Examples are too familiar to require notice, and Prof. Graham Wallas has made us realise to what an extent the tendency is exploited by the ordinary election methods of a democratic country.<sup>36</sup>

##### EXAMPLES OF (b) THE FALLACY OF THE CROWD

*Remarks:* This would seem to be sometimes spoken of as "the herd instinct," but it is more properly the

instinct to do what everybody else in a crowd is doing. In a crowd swept by emotion, the emotion of each individual is intensified by the suggestion of all the rest. It may not be that actual suggestibility is increased, as it is, for instance, by nervous exhaustion, or by intoxication, but merely that a suggestion, to shout, for example, or to clap, or to hiss, when made by a thousand people, is a thousandfold stronger than when made by only one. In the same way, fear, in a nervous public speaker, may be proportionate to the size of his audience. The man who yields to a suggestion so multiplied, is likely at the same time to admit an uprush of unconscious impulse of sorts, to be swept off his conscious legs, as it were, his primitive instincts coming to the fore, his higher or more recently developed dispositions dropping into abeyance. We have not here, properly speaking, a herd instinct at all, nor is man a herd animal, any more than are his cousins the anthropoid apes.<sup>37</sup>

(b) Class of Examples (i): *Public Meetings*.—The skilled rhetorician, who has overcome his own fear of a crowd, knows how to use herd suggestibility in moving a large audience. It is easier, by dealing with people in numbers, to induce them to accept conclusions which will not bear investigation, or to persuade them to actions which can be done immediately and on the spot, before emotion has spent itself, and while the suggestion continues from their fellows in the crowd. Money may be got this way, papers signed, and pledges taken of sorts, whether vows of abstinence or of vengeance. It is hard not to do what every one else is doing.

Mr. Davenport tells of a friend of his who was standing on the outskirts of a camp revival meeting as a critical spectator, when he “suddenly found himself with his hands pressed against his lungs, shouting ‘Hallelujah!’ at the top of his voice.”<sup>38</sup>

(b) FALLACY OF “THE CROWD” (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (ii): Those responsible for *School and Military Discipline*, and the *discipline of “Institutions”* in general, are inclined unconsciously to make use of this mental weakness. It saves trouble if the large numbers of an institution act alike; accordingly all are required to act in a manner which commends itself to the authorities, and a few individuals are picked out for the force of their personality to strengthen suggestion. The rest may be trusted to follow suit.

We have not yet sufficient faith in the progressive tendencies of the race to dare to educate independent judgment, social and individual.

A man on entering *the Army* is trained to kill men, *i. e.* to perform a social act belonging to a stage of civilisation we have outgrown as individuals. Men nowadays can only be induced to do it when their whole lives are lived on the mental plane proper to boys, and this is arranged for in the Army. Soldiers in the ranks are kept immature, required to indulge various primitive tendencies in order to encourage them to commit the final fallacy for which they exist. Thus it is that drunkenness is so prevalent amongst them, and that ex-soldiers of the regulars have hitherto been of so little use in industrial life that the warning is common “No old soldiers need apply.” Thus it is, in short, that they are “Our Boys,” so lovable and so mentally undeveloped.

The training and tradition of officers is to match. It belongs to the age of chivalry, with its twofold devotion to “duty” and to “sport.”<sup>39</sup> The ideal embodied is not Christian, it is that of the Japanese Bushido,<sup>40</sup> or the ideal of a Sir Galahad who rides and shoots and is religious, finding that he can cut more men’s heads open in consequence.<sup>41</sup>

The *Boy Scout* ideal, on the contrary, is in line with our racial development. It aims at turning boys into men, while the Army turns men into boys.

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*Institutions* exploit crowd suggestibility to save expense and labour—the intellectual labour of superintendents and the manual labour of subordinates. In some Workhouses, inmates are required to spend their lives sitting at their bedsides; in some Blind Asylums, men of thirty have to submit to one discipline with boys of thirteen, and to conform to a hundred and one restrictive little rules, so as to make their routine easier to arrange. The lower their general mental development, the more safely can any crowd of people be relied upon to keep rules and obey orders. Children, native races, and feeble-minded people, are all particularly suggestible, hence amenable to discipline, and easy to exploit.

### FALLACY OF “THE CROWD” (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (iii): *Fashions* of all kinds, from hats to opinions. Where a fashion comes to stay it depends later upon the fallacy of authority, unless, indeed, it survive on its merits.

### X.—THE FALLACY OF MAGIC INFLUENCE

This is true,		Things influence each
or	because	other.
This is the thing to do,		

*Origin.*—In its primitive form this fallacy is the more or less implicit notion “that things act on each other at a distance through a secret sympathy, the impulse being transmitted from one to the other by means of what we may conceive as a kind of invisible ether.”<sup>42</sup> This idea, it would seem, contains the germ of the concept of cause and effect. If things are experienced together, or seen to resemble each other, then the thought of one calls up the thought of the other; they are seen as having-to-do-with each other. “The very beasts associate the ideas of things that are like each other, or that have been found together in their experience; and they could hardly survive for a day if they ceased to do so.”<sup>43</sup>

A woman used to throw fish into an inland pond to feed the seagull wintering there. A large dog accompanied her and usually went into the water. When the dog, instead of approaching the pond, went away from it, the gull would follow him and miss his food. He associated the dog with the food. If he had possessed the faculty of reason this gull would have proceeded to compel or propitiate the dog, as a four-footed God, the provider of food.

Just so does the Central Australian associate the cry of the plover with the advent of rain, and he tries to make the rain come by imitating the cry.<sup>44</sup>

Things that are alike influence each other favourably, but if markedly different, they are felt to be hostile and to have adverse effects on each other.

#### EXAMPLES OF FALLACY OF MAGIC INFLUENCE

Class of Examples (i): *Superstitious belief in quack remedies.*

Red medicine makes white people red. A drink made from a strong ox makes weak people strong. A belt or ring containing lively electricity makes enervated people vigorous. Doctors no longer recommend Sir Kenelm Digby's sympathetic powder, which cured a wound when applied to the weapon that inflicted it,<sup>45</sup> but most of us have heard of modern instances of similar treatment (where contact supplies the connecting bond).

#### FALLACY OF "MAGIC INFLUENCE" (contd.)

Class of Examples (ii): "*Innate horror*" of some vices, and the general indulgence towards others, are probably indirect effects of this fallacy.<sup>46</sup> Those vices at which we shudder were, perhaps, once thought to endanger the harvest; those we condone, to have had a favourable effect on it. Amongst equally civilised peoples the same sexual irregularity is regarded by some races as execrable, by others as scarcely reprehensible.<sup>47</sup>

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Just so the same practice was thought by some primitive groups to endanger the food supply, and by others to have a propitious effect. Both ideas were the result of the notion that things influence each other, for any sexual practice which suggested to the flocks and herds to propagate their kind was good in the eyes of the primitive ; <sup>48</sup> whence it may be that his civilised descendant has a feeling, "transcending reason," that it is not so very wrong. Any sexual practice, on the contrary, which suggested to the flocks and herds to produce no offspring, was evil or bad, in the eyes of the primitive ; <sup>49</sup> and the records of this belief in language and custom give the modern man an innate feeling that the practice in question is a heinous offence.

### FALLACY OF "MAGIC INFLUENCE" (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (iii): We find examples of this fallacy here and there throughout the literature of Theosophy, Christian Science, Higher Thought and similar movements. A deep regard for moral and spiritual truth seems in this case to go along with a certain bluntness of feeling towards intellectual truth. Some mistakes are taken over from the writers of the Old Testament, or the Upanishads, or from mediæval Alchemists, as the case may be, mistakes which were characteristic not of those teachers, but of their time. Thus to Aristotle it was self-evident that no creature on the sea-shore could die till the tide turned and the source of life departed ; to the fourteenth century Alchemist, that after a good meal a man weighed lighter, since he felt more buoyant. The typically modern mind has outgrown the magical habit of thought productive of such passages as the following. "Pure and lofty thoughts are composed of rapid vibrations and can only affect the rare and subtle grades of mind-stuff. . . . Base and evil thoughts draw into the mental body the coarser materials suitable for their own expression, and these materials repel and drive out the finer kinds." <sup>50</sup> Categories of

mind and matter are here confused, and, in addition, the fallacy is exhibited that like produces like. A rare and fine character must be made of rarified and fine matter.<sup>51</sup> Coarse matter must produce coarse thoughts; just as, in the examples quoted above, the ebbing force of the tide must produce ebbing vitality, and a man who feels light and springy must weigh light. Reasoning of this kind cannot be made explicit nowadays and retained.

A glamour surrounds the occultism of Indian seers, because it is associated with the lofty spiritual teachings of their sacred writings, but it is these which are their glory, not the occultism, which is shared by most, if not all, primitive peoples—by the modern Eskimo, Redskin, and African Negro, as well as the ancient Greek and Hebrew, Babylonian and Assyrian. Scholars have noticed the astonishing “agreement between the magic ritual of the old Vedas and the shamanism of the so-called savage.”<sup>52</sup>

#### FALLACY OF “MAGIC INFLUENCE” (*contd.*)

Class of Examples (iv): *Hostility to inoculation* when introduced by Jenner, was partly based on a belief in the magical properties of the vaccine serum. Hostile pamphlets of the day told of ox-faced boys, of ladies who coughed like cows and grew hairy all over, and of others who bellowed like bulls, and all from having taken the bovine essence into their systems.<sup>53</sup>

This finishes our list of typical fallacies, and we see them as mental tendencies which have their uses, turned into abuses when permitted to outlive their day.

The evolution of mind is both a cause and a result of conscious effort, and at every stage man is presented with a choice. Not every race or individual chooses the harder task, or we should have no relapses such as that recorded in the languages of America;<sup>54</sup> but in the case of our own primitive forefathers, it was the uphill path of progress which they took, and they call upon us



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to be worthy of our inheritance; to resist fallacy as they resisted it, whatever guise of the day it may assume.

With us, as with them, the best corrective is a sense of values, which prevents fallacy from doing harm. The second best (and indispensable to such as feel its need) is a training in accurate thought.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER X

- <sup>1</sup> See Prof. Graham Wallas, *The Great Society*, chap. iv.
- <sup>2</sup> See *supra*, pp. 70-1.
- <sup>3</sup> Cf. Sir Alfred Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*, Series II. ch. vi.
- <sup>4</sup> Hymn to Hapi, the Nile God. See E. A. Wallis Budge, *Gods of the Egyptians*, 1904, I. 147.
- <sup>5</sup> Job xlii. 3.
- <sup>6</sup> Rossetti, *Soothsay*.
- <sup>7</sup> See Mrs. J. R. Green, *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing*, 1909.
- <sup>8</sup> See *Life of Barnave*, by E. D. Bradby, 1915, I. 130, etc.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 333.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, I. 334.
- <sup>11</sup> See, e. g. Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*, pp. 229, etc., where sexual libido is considered the primary energy, and every symbol which can be seen as threefold is said to be a phallic symbol.
- <sup>12</sup> *Supra*, p. 143.
- <sup>13</sup> *Times' History of the War in South Africa*, 1902, II. 116-17.
- <sup>14</sup> See *Bird Notes and News* (published quarterly).
- <sup>15</sup> Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, 9th ed., 1853, p. 47.
- <sup>16</sup> *Chemical Discovery*, etc., Sir Wm. A. Tilden, 1916, p. 228.
- <sup>17</sup> *Rugby Tennessee*, 1881, p. 106.
- <sup>18</sup> See Sir Hugh Clifford's *Studies in Brown Humanity*.
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. Dean Inge, *The Church and the Age*, 1912, p. 34, where he speaks of the instinct to which he owes his deanery and its stipend as a "certain appetite" useful to the savage but "inconveniently insistent in civilisation"!
- <sup>20</sup> Edition of 1609, p. 97.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 34.
- <sup>22</sup> *Exploitation of Plants*, Prof. Oliver, 1917, p. 38.
- <sup>23</sup> See article in *Manchester Guardian : Transport Supplement*, March 17, 1920.
- <sup>24</sup> See Sir Ian Hamilton's *Gallipoli Diary*.
- <sup>25</sup> *Exploitation of Plants*, p. 90.
- <sup>26</sup> For a summary of the arguments see Rev. R. J. Campbell, *A Spiritual Pilgrimage*, 1916, p. 228.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*, 1907, p. 17.
- <sup>28</sup> See Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, 3rd ed., I. 80 *seq.* See *supra*, p. 66.
- <sup>29</sup> See R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, 1909, p. 19, and Frazer, *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, Vol. II. ch. iv.

- <sup>30</sup> *The Study of Animal Life*, by J. A. Thomson, 1917, p. 32.
- <sup>31</sup> *The Story of My Life*, by Helen Keller, 1903, p. 300.
- <sup>32</sup> *A Discovery of a New World, etc.*, 5th ed., 1684, p. 2.
- <sup>33</sup> *The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, by Vernon F. Storr, 1913, p. 177.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.
- <sup>35</sup> Georgi quoted in Ennemoser's *History of Magic*, 1854, I. 227.
- <sup>36</sup> *Human Nature in Politics*, 1908.
- <sup>37</sup> The herd instinct of Mr. Trotter would seem to be a blend of various primitive social instincts, while the herd instincts proper are those which prompt animals who live in herds (like the buffalo and wolf) to actions conducive to the safety of the herd, such as uttering a cry of alarm at the sight of an enemy.
- <sup>38</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, 1905, p. 226.
- <sup>39</sup> See Lord Horne in *The Gunner*, April 1, 1920.●
- <sup>40</sup> See *The Soul of Japan*, by Inazo Nitobe, trans. 1905.
- <sup>41</sup> "My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten  
Because my heart is pure."
- A. TENNYSON.
- <sup>42</sup> *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed. I. 54.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234. See also pp. 220-1.
- <sup>44</sup> *Across Australia*, Spencer and Gillen, 1912, I. 220.
- <sup>45</sup> Dr. J. A. Paris, *Pharmacologia*, 9th ed., 1843, p. 24.
- <sup>46</sup> See Frazer, *The Magic Art*, II. 117.
- <sup>47</sup> See Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 1908, II. 483.
- <sup>48</sup> See Frazer, *The Magic Art*, II. 97, 104 and 105.
- <sup>49</sup> "Bad" originally means homo-sexual, an etymology which harmonises with the above surmise.
- <sup>50</sup> Mrs. Besant, *Thought Power*, 1901, pp. 27, 28.
- <sup>51</sup> *Theosophy Simplified*, Irving S. Cooper, 1916, p. 15.
- <sup>52</sup> Dr. W. Caland, quoted by Frazer in *The Magic Art*, I. 229.
- <sup>53</sup> See *The Romance of Medicine*, Ronald Campbell Macfie, 1907, p. 231.
- <sup>54</sup> See *supra*, p. 67.



**PART III**  
**LOGIC APPLIED TO LIFE**



## CHAPTER XI

### POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING REASON

Reason is no dry pedant living apart and blighting the free spontaneous life of impulse, but the animating spirit that interpenetrates experience and gives to its otherwise scattered fragments new and harmonious meaning.—L. T. HOBBHOUSE.

IN the first section of this book we enquired into the nature of Reason and its relation to instinct and intuition. We saw how rational thought changes in character as it develops, and how its more advanced forms are mixed with primitive elements belonging to sub-rational and pre-rational levels of mind.

In the next section we considered fallacy, viewing it as the result of uneven growth, imperfect co-ordination between the primitive and the advanced. Our immediate task was destructive, the detection of error. But human interest lies mainly in construction; things are pulled down that better may be built, the false rejected to secure the true. It is a dull mind that always finds fault.

The rest of this book will be an attempt to see the constructive rôle which logic plays in life, and its practical bearing upon some of the current problems of the day. In this chapter the ground will be cleared of two prevalent misconceptions, which otherwise might prevent our point of view from being taken: the notion that the rational way of treating a situation is sometimes repugnant to good feeling; and the contradictory notion, that only morally good action is rational at all.<sup>1</sup>

The first misconception is that of writers and thinkers, not a few, who denounce logic and place it in antithesis to love, as hard and cold and heartless. Thus Ruskin speaks of "the man who perceives rightly because he does not feel, and to whom the primrose is very accurately the primrose because he does not love it," comparing him on the one hand with "the man who perceives wrongly because he feels," and on the other with the man who perceives rightly in spite of his feelings.<sup>2</sup> Ruskin was ahead of the current psychology of his time in some directions, but surely not here. 'How could love of a primrose prevent any one from seeing it truly? Is it not rather the fact that a measure of love is a necessary condition of true vision? The man who sees a primrose most accurately is the man who knows most about primroses. Such an one, we suppose, sees it against a background from which he can educe, at will, the details of its structure, its parts and characteristics, its relatives in the plant world of to-day, and its ancestors in history. But what motive could have prompted him to acquire this body of knowledge that did not at least include a love of primroses, and a love more far-reaching and disinterested than Lord Beaconsfield's, for instance, who only liked them in his salad? Here, surely, is a false antithesis, an untrue contrast between true perception and good feeling, between logic and love. The real antithesis may be brought out, perhaps, if we imagine the symbolic God who stands for each of these conceptions.

A God of Logic would be a God who was Truth; the source and the sum of all things true, of all instances of true reasoning, conclusions correctly deduced, facts accurately observed, purposes completely fulfilled, means appropriately chosen, consequences exactly foreseen. He would be the creator and preserver of every effort to think truly, and to act in correspondence with facts; every effort of man, in short, to make further acquaintance with himself and the world, and to live in harmony

with these. We can see at once that a God of Logic personifies truth and nothing else. He is not a God of Love. He wins our respect, our worship perhaps, but not our love. But this does not make him incompatible with love—still less hostile to it—indeed we imagined the God of Christianity as combining the two attributes.

The science of acoustics is not deemed hostile to music because it cannot make a sonata, nor the science of chemistry hostile to farming because it cannot change a granite subsoil; then why should the science of reasoning (*i. e.* logic) be deemed hostile to good feeling because it cannot give a man a loving heart?

We may find the origin of the misconception in certain charges brought against logic, even by its discriminating friends.

Mr. Clutton Brock, in the course of a most logical book, says, "There is an idea of God conceived out of logic, not out of love, in Calvinism, and it is a nightmare to us."<sup>3</sup> Our own nightmare would be a God conceived out of hatred. We venture to think that this is what Mr. Brock means; for a God, (to accept his expression,) conceived out of logic, would be meaningless, he would be form without content, the scheme of relations between things without anything there to be related. We can apply the rules of logic to any conception of God, but we can no more conceive a God out of logic than we can conceive a song out of the laws of acoustics, or a sum out of the science of arithmetic, or a poem out of the rules of prosody. Here is a confusion between the contrary and the contradictory, between opposites within one and the same field of reference, and contradictories which belong to different fields of reference.

Logic and love belong to different categories. Human progress exhibits the development of both, but the most rational man is not always the most loving; sometimes he is not loving at all, for all his logicity. Because



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logic may exist along with bad feeling, the two are sometimes confused.

The second misconception also arises from confusion of ideas, but in this case it is good feeling which is confused with logic. We have often heard it argued of recent years that the Great War upset the calculations of those who imagined that "Reason ruled all." We will take an example of this argument from Dr. C. J. Jung, the psycho-analyst.

This great catastrophe, he says in effect, was unforeseen, and unforeseeable by reason, it was a thing entirely outside its scope.<sup>4</sup> We rub our eyes. Did he find the long preceding period of peace equally incompatible with reason? Truly "War has shattered her slain," but did not the peace which preceded it also "grind them as grain"? There is much both in war and in peace which is the logical result of hatred and greed. Evidently Dr. Jung, to a certain extent, identifies Reason with Good. All evil is for him incompatible with reason. *His* nightmare, it would seem, might be a God conceived out of anything else than logic.

Reason, he thinks, would lead men to "dwell together in unity." But if two men lived in houses opposite each other, and each had certain things the other wanted, should we find that it upset our belief in the supremacy of reason, if one were to attack the other to get those things, and the other defended himself? For many years the chief occupation of each nation was the manufacture of weapons against the others, and it is not a very robust faith in reason which is upset because those weapons were eventually used. It is we who are proved to have reasoned wrong, not reason that is proved inapplicable to the circumstances.

Thus we find that logic is apt to be given the same name as its subject-matter when this is of an extreme type. It is abused by some, because it is thought to partake of the nature of bad feeling, believed to be

hostile to love. By others it is thought to partake of the nature of good feeling, believed to be hostile to hatred.

It is as though the science of acoustics were to be abused by some, because of the offensive noises to which it applied; whilst others were to deny that acoustics (seeing they are applicable to the symphonies of Beethoven), could have anything at all to do with the discordant yelling of a drunken mob. But the science of acoustics applies to every sound whatever. It shows, for instance, the fixed relations between amplitude, frequency and form of air-waves on the one hand, loudness, pitch and timbre of sounds on the other; and this just as much for "shrill notes of anger" as for "notes inspiring holy love." In the same way, logic is applied with equal appropriateness to facts of good or evil.

Why, then, is logic in the popular mind confused with its subject-matter more than are the other sciences? The laws of number, set out in the multiplication table, are just as abstract as the laws of thought in the syllogistic rules, but we do not hear arithmetic abused for being unfeeling.

\* Perhaps the explanation lies partly in the fact that some markedly logical people have been unfeeling. A similar slur attaches in the eyes of many to the Church of England, because some curates are foolish; to the Charity Organisation Society, because some of its workers are inquisitorial; to Socialists, because some Socialists are more bent on levelling down (as Dr. Johnson puts it) than on levelling up. What, then, is the type of man, picked out by the multitude as pre-eminently logical, who in turn colours the popular conception of logic?

He is, we think, a scientist *par excellence*, like Wordsworth's botanist who dissected flowers on his mother's grave. If he were doing this for a beneficent purpose, he would be regarded with approval. The point is,

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that so far as he has normal human feelings, they interfere with his task, render it difficult, or, without a strong counteracting purpose, impossible.

An example of such conflict of emotions is seen in the lover of animals who vivisects. A man may be led to inflict pain on a dog because of his love for dogs and people, and his desire to diminish their suffering in the future; or because of his passionate interest in pure science, and comparative absence of feeling for dogs; or because of a cruel and morbid pleasure in torturing dumb animals. (Our own legal restrictions exclude the last motive amongst ourselves, but it is not unknown.) So with an enthusiastic study of the science of logic.

It may be pursued in cases where the ordinary man, or ordinary woman, is too much overcome by feeling to reason coolly and accurately, or even explicitly at all. A man in love cannot consciously reason where his beloved is concerned, nor can one standing at a deathbed, nor receiving news of the arrival of his first-born; and the world is full of births, deaths and marriages, calling for tears and laughter, and interfering with calm calculation and abstract thought. Hence we picture the logical person as one who is lacking in natural feeling; and there is a certain amount of truth in the description. It justly portrays one type of logical man, whose thought is the more immediately effective because it is not hindered by conflicting emotion.

There are, in fact, amongst lovers of reason, people who are somewhat cold-hearted; men like Samuel Butler, who are filled with indignation against the false rather than with enthusiasm for the true. Using weapons of raillery or scorn, they wage a war against humbug and false sentiment. But even when they are deficient in tender feeling, so long as their indignation rings true, their strong and fearless application of logic is useful to their neighbours and to the world in general. Some passion prompts their energies, and this is often

a love of truth for truth's sake. Love of truth may be ruthless in effect, and, when it acts in the same direction as hatred, it may lend itself to misconstruction. But if some timid hearts are bruised, others are inspired and encouraged. For logic thus applied works in two directions. It subordinates moral enthusiasm to intellectual interest, but it kills prejudice by introducing the "pale cast" of reflective thought. It lays bare the blind, instinctive workings of a hidden hatred as often as it hinders the spontaneous action of impulsive love.

This type of logical mind is, however, popularly condemned on other grounds as well. We have already noticed the ill-based fear lest men who take to reasoning should cease to be intuitive.<sup>5</sup> A similar fear has been expressed that, by becoming logical, mankind will weaken generous impulse. For logical people are cautious how they trust to impulse. They do not "damn the consequences," lest the consequences damn them.

Impulse is worshipped, perhaps, by people who are inclined to repress their own, but who, looking forward, see life itself, and the ultimate progress of the race, dependent on impulsive energy.

It is also praised, from another direction, by those who seek an excuse for kicking over the habitual restraints of reason, who appeal to "the unwritten law," the "limits of human nature," and so forth.

We have an example of this modern impulse-worship in the philosopher, who talks of "seemingly altruistic action" being "a sham," because it is "the issue of cold calculation," or of "habits formed under the influence of rewards and punishments"<sup>6</sup>—as though these two last motives were on a par! A cold calculation that love is better than hatred, though we do not feel loving at the moment, may be what leads mankind in general to "check the angry blow." Such calculation may be cold, but the capacity to make it and to act on it excites a glow of emotion second to none in

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warmth, for do we not here see the very root and source of man's progress from the brute—his desire for a far goal? <sup>7</sup>

It is a mistake to think that impulse on the whole is weakened by logic, the very application of logic itself is evidence of impulse—the impulse to think logically. Some impulse or other we must have, or we could not act at all, and it would seem that while its direction is partly under our control, its total quantity is not.<sup>8</sup>

But the view we criticise makes an unwarrantable assumption, viz. that generous impulse, though essential to progress, will not stand the test of rational reflection.

Such an outlook betrays a deep-seated scepticism of human goodness. It implies that Man cannot be good both at conscious and unconscious levels of mind—cannot be good-upon-impulse, and also good-upon-reflection. If impulsively good, then generous impulse must be allowed to slip past, before self-seeking reason has had time to catch and spoil it. If rationally good, then reason must lay wait for selfish impulse, and beguile it into paths of virtue by a little fraud—the promise of a cent. per cent. interest on good works, or the threat of hell fire to scare from evil-doing.

This is the philosophy of the repressed, with whom conscious and unconscious levels of mind, rational and impulsive natures, are out of harmony. It will be considered in the next chapter. The view here taken shows Man to be both good and bad at all his mental levels. From being primitive and undeveloped, he is becoming civilised and developed, and the process is a continual unfolding into consciousness of the good and the bad tendencies blended in his nature. Logic aids the process. It does not weaken impulse, though it helps the subordination of lower to higher impulse, of immediate to far aims.

The type of logical man we have been considering is not, in our opinion, typical of "the logically minded." We would prefer for our symbolic figure the man of

passionate conviction and warm feeling, who is by nature pre-eminently rational. History abounds in such, from the earliest times to the present. These very logical men and women are the salt of the earth, the apostles of progress, who build on the only sure foundation. They stand out like stars in a continuous firmament. They lead us amid the bewildering confusion of to-day, lights shining in darkness. With a full share of the humane sentiments they combine a passionate love of truth. Martyrs they may be, but never fanatics; enthusiasts, not bigots. Even on the scaffold their appeal is to reason, and to the sane human emotions which reason supports, never to passion or prejudice. Socrates and Marcus Aurelius are classical examples of the type. Sir Thomas Moore, Shakespeare, Dr. Johnson, John Stuart Mill, Browning, Darwin . . . these are a few of the mighty host who vindicate the logical character from the charge of being callous. They are people (to quote the words of Dean Inge) "to whom passing events are chiefly important in so far as they are *not* 'passing,' but linked on to some great idea which is working itself out—some idea the beginning of which we did not hear, the end of which we shall not see, and the meaning of which we very imperfectly understand." <sup>9</sup> For them "Eternity is in love with the productions of time." <sup>10</sup>

The type is portrayed in Romain Rolland's description of Handel—

"He is of the kind who drink in the life universal, assimilating it to themselves. His artistic will is mainly objective. His genius adapts itself to a thousand images of passing events, to the nation, to the times in which he lived, even to the fashions of his day. . . . It weighs other styles and other thoughts, but such is the power of assimilation and the prevailing equilibrium of his nature that he never feels submerged and overweighted by the mass of these strange elements. Everything is duly absorbed, controlled, and classified. This

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immense soul is like the sea itself, into which all the rivers of the world pour themselves without troubling its serenity." <sup>11</sup>

We are reminded of the words of another logical hero—

"Different things delight different people. But it is my delight to keep the ruling faculty sound without turning away either from any man or from any of the things which happen to men, but looking at and receiving all with welcome eyes and using everything according to its value." <sup>12</sup>

So much for the charge of heartlessness. We may now return to the second misapprehension noticed—the view that catastrophes, such as the war, are outside the pale of reason. Here, as we saw, "the rational" is identified with "the good," and it is argued, when evil things happen, that reason is proved to be not all-pervasive. But reason is a grasp of the relation between parts in a system, such as the system of means and end. The relation is not the less reasonable because the end designed be an evil end. The conception of the devil is no less reasonable than the conception of God; hatred is as logical as love. A God who is love and yet fries his children in hell is self-contradictory, and to that extent illogical, like the God who ordered the Israelites to destroy their enemies' non-combatants, and who yet at the same time "loved mercy."

The Great War was the logical result, as we have said, of envy and covetousness. But envy and covetousness are themselves in antagonism to the main current of human progress, hostile to the purpose of the world as we conceive it. For the human race throughout its history displays a tendency, as Westermarck has pointed out, to widen the boundaries of the group within which friendly feeling prevails.<sup>13</sup> No modern thinker disputes this. Hence we may regard one of the main purposes of human evolution to be "peace and goodwill." But when the world was plunged in a war, which hardly

anybody wanted, it seemed as though this purpose was for the time frustrated, as though something non-rational had happened. At least it seemed so to some, who went about without noticing the evidences of hatred and greed, but imagined that Europe was completely civilised. To others, acutely conscious of inter-group animosity in peace-time—of the class antagonism, individual and racial acquisitiveness, and of the sufferings of the inarticulate, which disfigured our civilisation in 1913—the war assumed a different aspect. They saw these ugly and pernicious factors come to a head, and declare themselves, standing out naked and conspicuous; so that for a moment each man was required to take a side, and to realise the enemy he was fighting; a moment later and the forces were again obscure, conscious and unconscious again in subtle blend.

Good and evil are always there, and logic applies equally to both. It is reasonable to believe that good is, on the whole and in the long run, triumphant; and reasonable to believe that evil is still powerful and has its local victories. Both alike are the subject-matter of logic. Both constitute a "content," the "form" of which alone is logic's immediate concern. Good feelings and bad, wise thoughts and foolish, true and false, all are the material which logic handles.

This brings us to another form of the last misconception, and again we will go to Mr. Clutton Brock for an illustration, because being an unusually clear thinker his lapses in logicity are correspondingly clear. Mr. Clutton Brock puts the alternative between a world as he would have it, and a world of chaos or nonsense. "Where the Kingdom of Heaven is not seen," says he, "men see only a nonsense world and can have no principles at all." <sup>14</sup>

Now there is no such thing as a nonsense world, either for the savage or for the most civilised man. It is an abstraction which no one could hold in his mind for five minutes. The objective counterpart of such an



abstraction is not a quality of things in themselves, but a quality of the mind which fails to apprehend things in themselves. Just as we used to be told picturesquely that "Nature abhors a vacuum," so does Nature abhor chaos, or nonsense.

To the tired brain words have no meaning. To the ignorant onlooker the movements of ants are chaotic. To the logical thinker the trains of thought of a Mrs. Nickleby or a Miss Bates are nonsensical. To the man of clear moral vision the doings of people who disregard the kingdom of Heaven are chaotic. But words always have some meaning or other to the person speaking them, and every train of thought, or course of action, is directed towards the achievement of some end, even if it be an unconscious end. They only seem nonsensical to one who is ignorant of their meaning or intention.

The non-logical cannot exist, any more than can the meaningless or the non-existent. There is no such thing as a perfectly senseless human action. Impatience with each other's points of view, and the inability to imagine other people's subconscious motives, are responsible for the false notion. It is easier to dismiss an antagonistic theory as nonsense, or a delusion as "insane," than it is to enter into the mind of the framer and discover its logic.

Prof. Freud has made it clear, by his researches into the unconscious mind, that even the madman's fancies, and the sane man's dreams, have meaning, and hence logic. Their logic is one with all logic; given the premisses, conclusions follow by the same rules.

There is nothing chaotic, or non-rational, about the thoughts or actions of any human being. Man is a rational animal, and all his acts of consciousness are rational. He cannot have a thought or feeling which is not part of a process of reasoning either implicit or explicit. He cannot think or feel without his thought or feeling referring to objects in a scheme of objects. He cannot be non-logical.

Illogical he may be, but, as we have seen, that is a different matter.<sup>15</sup>

• NOTES TO CHAPTER XI •

<sup>1</sup> The two views may be stated in terms of formal logic thus—

I. "Some instances of rational behaviour	are	instances of not-good behaviour
(Some Rs	are	not-Gs)

and—

II. All instances of not-good behaviour	are	instances of not-rational behaviour
(All not-Gs	are	not-Rs)

It follows from II that—

No Rs	are	not-Gs
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which is a contradiction of I.

<sup>2</sup> *Modern Painters*, 2nd ed. in small form, 1898, III. 168.

<sup>3</sup> *Studies in Christianity*, 1918, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology*, 2nd ed., p. 398.

"The present fearful catastrophic world-war has tremendously upset the most optimistic upholder of rationalism and culture."

<sup>5</sup> *Supra*, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Wm. McDougall, *Social Psychology*, 2nd ed., 1909, p. 71. Cf. *Body and Mind*, 1911, Preface, p. xiii.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., II. 119.

<sup>8</sup> See Jung's "libido" theory, *Collected Papers*, 2nd ed., p. 104. The mind that "lacks energy" has it repressed in the unconscious.

<sup>9</sup> *The Church and the Age*, 1912, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> Wm. Blake, *Poetical Works*, Oxford ed., 1914, p. 250.

<sup>11</sup> *Handel*, by R. Rolland, 1916, p. 111.

<sup>12</sup> M. Antoninus, Long's trans., VIII. 43.

<sup>13</sup> Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 1908, II. 743 4. See also L. T. Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, 1906, I. 368.

<sup>14</sup> A. C. Brock, *What is the Kingdom of Heaven?* 1918, p. 33.

<sup>15</sup> See *supra*, p. 94.

## CHAPTER XII

### LOGIC AND EDUCATION

What is youth but an untamed beast ? All whose actions are rash, and rude, not capable of good counsel when it is given ; and ape-like, delighting in nothing but in toys and baubles ?--  
LEWIS BAYLY, 1612.

LET us imagine a schoolmaster who shares the views set forth in this book, and let us enquire how they would affect his educational aims and practice ; what he would proceed to teach his pupils.

In education, as in all other collective activities, practice lags behind theory, and one result of the present view of mental development would be the speeding-up of current reforms, from a surer grasp of the directions in which they are actually proceeding.

The teacher would set his pupils the aim of consciously assisting in their own development, both individual and racial ; of carrying on the task bequeathed them by their forefathers, the task of cultivating the higher faculties. He would see human progress, and hence the broad purpose of education, in a double aspect as *a development of the will, and a search for truth*. The twofold task, unconsciously performed at first, is becoming ever more conscious, and continually changing its immediate form as the race evolves.

At first life itself is the only education. " Fate," says Matthew Arnold.

“ . . . that it might force man to obey,  
Even in his own despite his being's law,  
Bade through the deep recesses of our breast  
The unregarded river of our life  
Pursue with undiscernible flow its way;  
And that we should not see  
The buried stream, and seem to be  
Eddying at large in blind uncertainty  
Though driving on with it eternally.”

This is the condition of primitive man, who is not inferior to ourselves, except as the child is inferior to the youth. It is time we changed our barbarous and unsympathetic attitude towards the primitive, as we have changed it towards the child and the animal.

The Elizabethan, whose sentiments head this chapter, was scandalised by the frivolity of children, just as Cowper in the eighteenth century could not help being a little shocked at “the beasts that roam over the plain” for their disregard of the sabbath. It would seem as though Man had to overcome the beast and the child in himself before he could afford to be friendly with them in nature. At that rate we shall regard “inferior races” from their own point of view, and hence justly, as soon as they cease to symbolise unconscious and discreditable traits in ourselves; as soon, that is, as we make closer acquaintance with these same tendencies and no longer find them shocking.

The arch-enemy of education at all stages is sloth. With every new step, enlightenment meets the opposition of sloth and timidity. Each generation in turn grudges the effort of adjusting itself to reality in the light of new ideas, regretting a blissful ignorance fantastically attributed to its forefathers, and instinctively defending itself against the danger of too much goodness, truth and beauty. The “safe” people of the Stone Age deprecated the use of iron, and set themselves against a new-fangled invention so abhorrent to the gods;<sup>1</sup> in every age the Pharisees are loyal to duty and strong to stone the prophets. But the race of man is being “hounded of heaven,” and sloth is doomed.

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Since the day when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Man has been unable to forget that he is naked; he cannot any longer, if he would, think of the earth as flat, of air as imponderable, of madmen as responsible for their actions, or of the dead man as likely to persecute his enemy in the form of a ghost.<sup>2</sup> We are no less desirous than were our forefathers of making fortunes, but we no longer look for the philosopher's stone whereby to turn the baser metals into gold.

In the main we are led forward by our language and surroundings—the result of the experience of the race. Each generation imbibes more advanced ideas, and is forced to think about more advanced problems. Our method of learning has not changed. We see things that were hidden from our fathers, but are not essentially wiser; our grandsons are as wise as we and know more. One aim persists in education, whether primitive or civilised: “to do our duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call us,” to fight, that is, the retrogressive tendencies of our time and place, and to aid the recent developments of mind in the race.

What, then, are the recent developments of our own time? And first *what retrogressive tendencies have we to combat?*

We have already looked at some of them in the fallacies which an attempt has been made to classify. Our schoolmaster will warn his pupils against those same fallacious tendencies, pointing out their special range amongst school subjects. In the pursuit of Natural Science, “limited experience” and “the scientific fallacy” spread snares for the unwary; the study of history is beset by “primitive self-centredness” and “the fallacy of the simple and striking”; while in religious knowledge “authority” and “the fallacy of the marvellous” present peculiar pitfalls.

And here we come upon a question of great importance for the educator. Is he to tell his pupils that the

laws of reason, justly applied to every other subject in the school curriculum, collapse mysteriously in the presence of religion? Is he to throw reason overboard, declining even to discuss his change of front? That was, indeed, the attitude demanded of the teacher not very long ago, an attitude impossible to one who saw its inconsistency, and believed reason and religion alike to be all-pervasive, each appropriate to every sphere of life.

If religion be outside the laws of reason, is it not time those laws were overhauled?

The difficulty is disappearing, and it is becoming recognised that religious instruction, like any other, is best given by enthusiasts for the subject, who are prepared to defend their own position and aware of its logical basis. The sincere Rationalist and the sincere Roman Catholic, however one-sided their respective attitudes, are better able to teach religion in Protestant schools than the man who slurs over fundamental difficulties. Religion, as well as logic, is in course of being overhauled, and the supposed incompatibility vanishes with a firmer grasp of the progressive character of divine revelation, and of the relativity of truth.

• We will look for a moment at the inner meaning of the old mistaken attitude, the attitude of the school-master who encouraged a boy to think in every other department of life, but in matters of divinity warned him that thought was out of place or even impious.

The fallacy may be illustrated in its most insidious form, from the mouths of champions of reason, whose prestige gives weight to their very lapses. Dr. McDougall shall supply us with one example and Wesley with another.

In an early edition of one of his books Dr. McDougall professes not to believe in Supernatural Sanction, and yet he doubts whether civilisation could survive the exposure of the delusion. It is the sort of lie, he thinks, that does people good.<sup>3</sup>

In a similar manner Wesley, in his day, deplored

the decay of a belief in witchcraft. "With my last breath," he wrote, "will I bear testimony against giving up to infidels *one great proof of the invisible world.*"<sup>4</sup> Yet Wesley, that great protagonist of reason, said elsewhere that "to renounce *reason* is to renounce *religion*, that reason and religion go hand in hand, and that all irrational religion is false religion."<sup>5</sup>

Dr. McDougall hesitates. He cannot himself deny the supremacy of reason, but he hopes that other people may. Wesley, because he is six generations earlier, has no such scruples. He roundly disowns his allegiance on occasion, asking "to *stand in the good old Paths,*" listening to the Oracles of God, and the Voice of Authority.<sup>6</sup>

Religion and morality are felt by both these men to be of such tremendous importance, that when confronted with them they are inclined to lose their heads, and sink back on the pre-rational, primitive defences of "authority" and "the marvellous."

Such a retreat becomes unnecessary as soon as thinkers clearly see the objective reality of the truths they value—see that religion stands on its own merits, nor needs extraneous support.

It is easy enough to expose the fallacy committed, by a *reductio ad absurdum*, after the manner of formal logic. A doubt as to the value of any truth, it might be said, is self-destructive, for if a false belief can do people more good than a true one, then we may doubt the value of any true judgment whatever, including that of the judgment here advanced, about the usefulness to other people of mistaken notions. The position is thus shown to be untenable; the ground is cut from under the feet of him who holds it.

Such a refutation, however, throws no light upon how the false position comes to be occupied, and until we know this, occupied it will be.

In an earlier chapter we noticed that language itself implies a purpose to convey true information; hence

the once prevailing doctrines concerning witchcraft and supernatural sanction aimed at expressing some truth or other, a truth to which each owes its value. Why, then, is this truth no longer recognisable? The answer lies in the general trend of mental development.

The truth in question is a subjective truth, expressed symbolically, after the manner of primitive thought; its objective setting is largely unreal, fantastic, the result of fallacious observation. In the case of witchcraft the position is recognised, and the twentieth-century Englishman no longer regards his belief in an unseen world as bound up at all with a belief in witches; He is only, however, beginning to realise that there is equally little connection between the compelling force of higher motives and supernatural sanction. When the poet exclaims, "O world invisible, we view thee!" or St. Paul, "The love of Christ constraineth us," they utter the same truths as are embodied in witchcraft and supernatural sanction, but in forms which are likely to last longer. Subjective truth can nowadays be distinguished from its objective setting; but why, it must be asked, is its independent value ever lost sight of, and why do theologians, and even philosophers, cling here and there to the old error that it is even possible to adopt a theory or embrace a belief, not because of its truth, but because it is calculated to have a good effect on conduct? Why is the particular truth not seen to be as strong as it really is?

The answer is that nervous fear always drives a man back on to primitive and credulous levels of mind, levels at which he projects subjective fantasy.

In this case he looks out upon a world where spiritual and moral truths are impregnably strong, but he does not really see their strength, though he talks about it. He sees them not strong, but weak, as they are in his soul, with a weakness due to "repression" (in the psycho-analytic meaning of the word). Because his own dangerous impulses are managed by this illogical



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method, he is never sure of their exact strength; they are incalculable, magical, and he sees them projected symbolically in the dangerous potentialities of the race.

He dares not trust the strength of good forces outside him, because he vaguely feels that their counterparts in his own mind might be overturned at any moment.

The experience of psycho-analysts shows that dangerous tendencies when brought into consciousness become amenable to self-control, and the fear which formerly attached to them is then a pricked bubble. With clearer self-knowledge, witchcraft vanishes from the face of the earth, and supernatural sanction, but religion and morality remain.

In the interests of religion and morality, then, as well as of truth, the teacher will discourage repression, putting in its place a conscious self-control, a logical compromise, in harmony with development. And to discourage repression he must understand it.

Its usual motives, we surmise, are an intimate blend of higher and lower impulses; a divine longing after goodness goes hand in hand with primitive suggestibility and slavish obedience. None of these impulses is destroyed by being made conscious, but their partnership is dissolved, because it was crippling to the better partner.

Bondage to authority is shown in fear of other peoples' opinions (living or dead), and the soul which "hungers and thirsts after righteousness" is kept weak and immature, unable to cope with evil passions in the open. Feeling his weakness, the moral man creates structures for the support of his better self, in the form of religious and moral institutions. When he becomes acquainted with his own unconscious tendencies, good and bad, the good in him is self-supporting, and ultimately it is both religion and morality on their subjective side. This kind of self-knowledge marks a stage in the development of the will, that development which is nothing less than a perpetual increase in the range of

choice, a "ladder of emancipations," as the scientist has called it.<sup>7</sup>

The timid moralist is like the man who chooses a picture for his wall, not because he likes it, but because the Hyper-Neo-Futurists or the Loyal Royal Academicians recommend it. He thus renders a second-hand homage to the beautiful. As man advances, his homage to goodness, truth and beauty becomes more and more direct. He no longer has to pretend that evil and hostile passions are not his, as well as good ones. He can afford to admit them all, and form a compromise. We may illustrate the point by a concrete moral problem as it is met at different stages of development.

Imagine a vessel to be wrecked on the coast of a remote island, and this question put by the natives: "What shall be done with the shipwrecked sailors?"

*Highly civilised men* in this situation realise how much they would like the cargo for their own, not to mention the sailors' money, clothes, watches and rings; and consequently how much they would like the crew to be dead men. They also realise their feelings of compassion and sympathy, their spontaneous desire to succour these unfortunates. The impulsive force of pity may or may not outweigh that of the acquisitive instinct, but it determines conduct, because it is re-enforced by the ethical motive, in its late development, that of a conscious purpose habitually to choose the higher from amongst conflicting motives, out of a feeling for its absolute value.

*Primitive man* in the same circumstances is actuated by just the same impulses, but he does not make them conscious. He sometimes settles the question, like civilised man, on the side of compassion, not because he realises the comparative ethical values of his conflicting motives; but either unreflectingly, or because if he were to act differently he would offend the gods, and so bring bad luck upon himself and his group. Sometimes, on

the contrary, he kills the crew, and if he is a religious man he thinks that they and their clothes and cargo are god-sent for the purpose of enriching him and his.

*At an intermediate stage* of development the same motives operate. Compassion is now supported by a moral code,\* or religious injunction, which owes its existence to the implicitly felt absolute value of love and mercy. God commands man to "succour the afflicted." But until the absolute value of humane motives is made explicit, they do not always in particular cases gain the support of conventional religion and morality. Until a few generations ago God used to command Cornishmen, as they thought, to murder shipwrecked mariners; just as he still seems, to some primitive individuals amongst ourselves, to urge the destruction of Conscientious Objectors and Germans.

The task of developing the will, then, involves a bringing into consciousness of unconscious motives, since the conscious mind alone is the province of volition.

Accordingly the teacher will encourage his pupils to observe and study their dreams at night, wherein each may discover his own habitual tendencies, the sort of subjective story, or situation, which is constantly being woven, and projected on to objects of waking experience, by the mind at its unconscious levels.

Judged by this standard much of the moral education of the day is misdirected, much effort would be better abandoned; for the precepts of Prof. James are still in fashion, wherein he urges the teacher to exploit one primitive weakness to counteract another, to inhibit unwelcome instinct by auto-suggestion of the type of "I can because I ought." The neurotic boy, for instance, may imagine he feels sick or injured; then, if he be an apt pupil, he will say, "Am I sick? Have I been badly treated? Not a bit of it! Dismiss the morbid idea and turn to cheerful thoughts!" To the symptom of a fancied infirmity he thus adds the demoralising habit of self-hypnotism.<sup>8</sup> The school-

master of to-morrow will see this very auto-suggestibility as no less dangerous than the difficult dispositions it is called upon to destroy. Natural impulse is not to be dodged, manœuvred or coerced, but made conscious and deliberately controlled. Tendencies of a low type morally will no longer be checkmated by habits of a low type intellectually, but cured by harmonious development of all the impulses involved. As soon as a course is seen to be erroneous it is time to give it up, trusting the future. Self-deception and auto-suggestion are beginning to be recognised as primitive methods of acquiring mastery over primitive impulse. A new method will replace them when it is found safe to admit the truth, because the truth is seen to include, all along, a master desire for progress, the ruling passion of mankind.

The teacher of the future will impress upon each of his pupils the importance of overcoming his besetting fallacies, since the particular tendency is also universal; not only does it lead one boy or girl into error, but it helps to move whole nations in wrong directions, and alters the course of history for the worse.

He will show the directions whence threatens a danger of relapse into barbarism, so that each scholar will realise in what respects he is primitive, in what advanced. Then the young Englishman will know himself to be most like a savage, when most conventional, most trivial, and—convention permitting—least controlled. He will form a picture in his mind of that typical primitive he wishes not to resemble. This barbarian is one who breathes his native air in courts and mess-rooms, for etiquette preceded clothes; <sup>9</sup> he shares our middle-class horror of irregular sexual conduct, for this horror was prior to morality; <sup>10</sup> he sympathises with the sensibilities of our "united families," for people blame each other for not showing a proper feeling at their respective mother-in-laws' funerals, ere ever they learn to dig or count or sew; <sup>11</sup> and lastly, he is thoroughly at home in

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our slums, where the main pre-occupation of thought is like his own—the question whether So-and-so (in his case alive or dead) is or is not “offended.”

So much for retrogressive tendencies which the educator of youth is called upon to combat; and now to turn to the recent developments of mind which he will make it his object to promote.

Here also the aim of education is twofold—a search for truth and a development of will,—while in each case it is the newest task that demands most concentrated effort. In the sphere of knowledge no lesson is of greater importance to-day than that of the relativity of truth, a conception which accompanies valuation in the sphere of will, and we will here suggest one method of approaching the subject.

To show what is meant by truth being relative a simple illustration might be taken, such as the following. Suppose that from his window a man see a large, distant, solid object, whose outline is that of an equilateral triangle. If he be acquainted with the Pyramids, he may see it as a pyramid, which, as he knows, actually possesses four sides, each with the outline of an equilateral triangle, only one of which, however, in the present case is visible to him. Now suppose that in point of fact the object at which he looks is the end of a long, receding ridge of hills. His judgment, that it is a pyramid, contains in that case a measure of truth, for it describes accurately that aspect or face of the object which can be seen from his point of view, but it implies a wrong description of other aspects. If he hold his judgment “provisionally,” as a working hypothesis, it is partly true and in no way false. It would, then, be “this thing is a pyramid, so far as I can at present judge.” In so far as he cares for truth he is ready to listen to other, different, hypotheses, and his own, in the course of time becomes modified and supplemented.

Now on its objective side all truth is incomplete in

just this sort of way, and short of omniscience must be so. But incompleteness is not falsity, nor is a partial truth misleading unless mistaken for complete.

"This constitutes the curse that spoils our life  
And sets man maundering of his misery,  
That there's no meanest atom he obtains  
Of what he counts for knowledge but he cries  
'Hold here I have the whole thing—know, this time,  
Nor need search farther.' " <sup>12</sup>

This particular curse was removed perhaps when Darwin propounded the doctrine of evolution; at any rate Man has since been surer of the truth he knows, for he understands it to be a nucleus which nothing can destroy, destined to develop, and to take its place in the complete world of thought and of things. Truth is relative, because it is indestructible and growing.

Our teacher will make his pupils familiar with the various ways in which truth grows. He will accustom them to think of schemes of things, inseparable from the things themselves, and no less objectively real. The growth of truth is in each case a clearer discernment of some such scheme.

In certain cases these schemes exist all along, but come to be seen more clearly; in others they become objectively clearer, and so easier to see. To take examples; and first to show how a scheme may be presented to the notice of a man who yet fails to grasp it.

Junker narrates how an Egyptian Pasha, in Khartoum, never could be got to see the significance of a portrait.<sup>13</sup> An American traveller showed him a photograph of a Parisian "belle," and he guessed that it represented the bearded traveller himself. The human face is large and round and coloured, while this was a little bit of paper, flat and black. The resemblance lay in the similarity of relations between parts in a scheme. Measurements of features in the face were proportionately the same as those of certain marks on the paper. The light and shade on the one occupied the same

relative positions as the light and shade on the other; just as the face was round and had a black patch at the top, so was the marking on the paper round with a black patch at the top. The inter-relations were there, but the Pasha was unable to grasp them. He could not, as it were, put himself at the point of view from which they were discernible.

Evolution of truth is partly an increasing capacity in the mind of Man to grasp relations that actually exist, linking things together within schemes. Mankind is always making the sort of advance the Pasha would have made had he become able to see the meaning of a portrait; and the body of knowledge of the race is perpetually changing in form as thought comes to reflect reality more completely.

Our next example is the botanical conception of leaves. We are told that it was Goethe the poet who first clearly showed that the parts of a flower—petals, sepals, stamens and carpels—are truly leaves, just as much as are the seed leaves and the leaves proper, both of root and stem. All are leaves “more or less modified for their diverse work.”<sup>14</sup> Here was a new realisation of a scheme already existing in the objective world. It might have been reached from pondering on the implications of “leaf” when applied to a rose-petal as well as to a cabbage leaf. Or it might have been reached from observation of the once-prevailing type of flowering tree, the Cycadophytes, where the flower looks like the leaves, only coloured more brightly.

This is the way in which truth grows in every sphere of mind, intellectual, moral and æsthetic. In the moral sphere, for instance, we may notice the scheme of “human fellowship.” The brotherhood of man, expressed clearly by St. Paul, was already implicit in Jonah’s mission to Nineveh. It might have been realised in St. Paul’s time, through pondering the implications of Jonah’s mission, or it might have been realised by observing the friendly relations which were everywhere springing

up, in outlying parts of the Empire, between the common soldier and his former enemies, exhibiting the striking fact that people of all races and colours are inclined to make friends with each other, except where they stand in the way of each other's worldly prosperity. From the outset men are related to each other (as are the social animals) within objective schemes where love is the inter-relating force. The scheme is not seen or grasped, however, by men at an earlier stage.

Sometimes an advance made by thought appears to the hasty observer to be in an entirely wrong direction, leading to a *cul de sac*; the scheme into which things are put, seems objectively untrue, as in the case of "like producing like."<sup>15</sup> Here it looks as though the primitive reasoned falsely, from a number of striking particulars which did exist, to a universal connection which did not. But false reasoning is not inevitable, however primitive the mind of the reasoner, nor however incomplete his view of facts. No doubt there were logically-minded primitives whose implicit thought, if it could have been unfolded, would have stood as follows: "In these cases like produces like, and perhaps it always does, but it is possible that it does not." The nucleus of truth in this case was nothing less than the implicit recognition of natural law.<sup>16</sup>

In conclusion, a word may be said about the teaching of logic proper, and here we would advocate the method of finding out what logical problems are actually occupying the minds of pupils and of discussing these, for always and inevitably such problems are being pondered, too often merely with the result of "preventing a boy from getting on."

For a thousand years logical questions like the following were felt to be profoundly interesting: "The universals or classes into which we put things when we call them by a common name—do they really exist, or are they merely in thought? Are they separate from the individuals that constitute them, or only in and



of them? " <sup>17</sup> A short while ago a new world became visible to man when, in the course of his development, he shifted his egocentric poise of mind and began to look at external objects as each having a point of view of its own. Into this world Darwin's great discovery threw a flood of light, disclosing a new scheme of relations for the sum total of the universe, and one whose implications lie waiting to be unfolded. Pupils who are introduced to the notion of progressive change, and allowed to think, will find their own logical problems.

Not that it is every one's business to devote himself to a search for truth, since energy is best employed where inclination leads; but the scholar of the future will have it presented to him, as one of the duties of Man, to aid the purposes of evolution by tolerance, and by the encouragement of all constructive effort; he will look forward to a time when mankind in general will make a new world of it, by taking down the barriers, withdrawing the bolts, and removing the screens, imposed by a primitive fear.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER XII

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, 3rd ed., p. 230. See also F. T. Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, 1895, pp. 221, *seq*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the Togoland woman, who, should her husband die, for five or six weeks has to protect herself from his ghost "with a good stout stick." Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, 1877, p. 488.

<sup>3</sup> *Social Psychology*, 2nd ed., 1909, p. 320. Cf. *Body and Mind*, 1911, p. 203; Preface, p. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, F. M. Davenport, 1905, p. 141. See also *Journal*, May 25, 1708.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>6</sup> *Natural Philosophy*, 1770, I. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Prof. J. A. Thomson, *The Study of Animal Life*, 1917, p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> The force of *habit*, good or bad, is much exaggerated. See, e. g. how easily the social and industrial habits of generations are altered at the prompting of desire for riches, as in the "Industrial Revolution."

<sup>9</sup> Spencer and Gillon, *op. cit.*, II. 452.

<sup>10</sup> *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., II. 117.

- <sup>11</sup> Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, I. 250-3.
- <sup>12</sup> R. Browning (Forishtah loq.), "A Pillar at Sebzevar."
- <sup>13</sup> *Travels in Africa*, trans. A. H. Keane, 1890, p. 245.
- <sup>14</sup> Prof. J. A. Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- <sup>15</sup> See *supra*, p. 134.
- <sup>16</sup> See *supra*, p. 176.
- <sup>17</sup> See H. O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind*, 1911, II. 339.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE LOGIC OF COMPROMISE

Logical consequences are the scarecrows of fools and the beacons of wise men. The only question which any wise man can ask himself, and which any honest man will ask himself, is whether a doctrine is true or false.—T. H. HUXLEY.

It is often said that the French are more logical than we, because they are less prone to compromise, more ready to pursue to its conclusion any principle once espoused. There is a superficial truth in this judgment, but a deeper in its opposite. Growth or development demands a give and take between different parts of a developing whole; and this so-called logicity is one-sided growth.

The British Constitution, with its numerous compromises, is eminently logical, giving here a little and there a little, ignoring no interest which is sufficiently developed to have gained half-conscious recognition. Such compromise, it is true, though in itself logical, may be made illogically, by people who consciously pursue a single principle, but are unconsciously impelled by half a dozen. They would be still less logical were they to overlook conflicting tendencies altogether, for to give them no say in the matter would be a more fundamentally illogical proceeding. To see things "in a glass darkly" argues better vision than not to see them at all.

In real life no single principle holds sway unmodified; there is an obscure background of motive to every human

action, and social and political structures do not last which make no allowance for the development of this.

The kind of logicity for which the French are famed leads them on occasion to act with a singleness of purpose of which we English are incapable, and when the motive is humane they set an inspiring example to the world. We have an instance in the conduct of the National Assembly, whose leaders gave up their tithes, their feudal and seigneurial rights to the peasants, prompted by justice, generosity, and unselfishness that was heroic.<sup>1</sup>

This is on one side of the picture, while on the other is the thoroughness of that revenge which, largely thanks to the French, is embodied in the Peace Treaty of 1919.

It is in truth a spurious logicity, which consists in the application of one set of motives to conduct, while another and contrary set is ignored. The motives passed over are left to smoulder in the unconscious mind, till eventually they break out in exaggerated forms. A fallacy has been committed of "overlooking subjective factors."

We will now consider the sort of logical problems which people are called upon to settle in real life, and the pre-eminently logical method for settling them—that of compromise. Any practical problem may be formulated thus: Given factors A B C D . . . in circumstances X Y Z . . . to find the possible arrangements which promise stability.

A B C D . . . must include all the actual motives, unconscious as well as conscious; and the arrangement to be sought is a compromise, in harmony with development or progress. Thus A must be given more weight than C, where the one is an incipient force, the other moribund.

The problem would be simpler were we to consider a single factor, eliminating the rest; but it would be less logical because less real. Thus surgeons sometimes neglect the factor of their patients' nerves, and

educationalists of their pupils' home conditions, but they thereby solve their difficulties the less successfully.

We will illustrate our subject by taking a problem already glanced at in these pages, *the attitude of Man towards wild animals*, and we will now seek a logical answer to the question, "*Shall man, or shall he not, kill wild animals?*"

First we survey all those existing motives which bear upon the matter, then we look at the particular circumstances in which they have to be applied, and try to find a practical and satisfactory compromise amongst them.

Amongst the impulses which prompt a man in his behaviour towards wild animals, we notice the following—

*Man is prompted to kill by—*

- (a) The instinct of the supreme beast of prey in a hierarchy of beasts of prey, to pursue and kill (1) for food; (2) for self-preservation; (3) in play.
- (b) The acquisitive instinct—the desire to acquire and possess objects of value such as skins, plumage, and marketable corpses.
- (c) The instinctive love of danger, and desire to assert power through overcoming difficulties.
- (d) His innate love of Nature, and delight in association with his fellow-animals in their natural surroundings—an association which is incidental to sport.
- (e) A morbid or neurotic gratification gained by killing, *i. e.* blood-lust.
- (f) A desire for the social approval which is gained by doing as others do.

*Man is deterred from killing by—*

- (g) An innate feeling of kinship with the animals and consequent sympathy (such as leads him to domesticate animals as pets).
- (h) An instinctive aversion to taking life of any kind.

- (i) An innate admiration of, and reverence for, wild animals, on account of their beauty, their strength and their intelligence (such as leads primitive men to worship animals <sup>2</sup>) and the poet to exclaim—

“ Kill not the moth nor butterfly  
For the last judgment draweth nigh.” <sup>3</sup>

Let us consider the intrinsic force of the above motives, their respective places so far as we can judge in the scheme of human development.

- (c) Blood-lust we may rule out, since neurotic tendencies are curable by treatment, and therefore need not be gratified in ways which injure others.
- (f) Desire for social approval may also be ruled out at our present stage of civilisation. Group opinion helps to enforce the decision come to, whatever it be, but it does not help a mature mind in the framing of a decision.
- (b) (c) and (d) We find that the acquisitive instinct, love of danger, and delight in the natural surroundings of wild animals, are instincts capable of gratification in other ways which are unobjectionable. The merchant and some milliners, the gold seeker, Alpine climber, explorer, and the photographer of “ wild nature ” all show how these desires can be gratified without the necessity of dealing death.

We are left, then, with the following conflicting groups of motive. On the one side, the instinct of Man as a carnivorous animal to kill (a) for food; (b) in self-defence; and (c) for play. On the other side the instinct to avoid killing, because of sympathy, because of wonder and admiration, and because of a horror of killing as such.

Now that we have sifted our factors, it remains to

apply them to actual conditions, for example, to the questions raised by (x) vegetarianism, (y) by the chase, and (z) by the destruction of noxious animals.

But each of these questions needs to be considered in its particular setting of circumstance, for the actual strength of the impulses discerned, varies with time and race and other conditions. Thus some Indian peoples show a one-sided but consistent behaviour based on the anti-killing motives.<sup>4</sup> They refuse to destroy the pests which devour their crops, out of a compassion like that of St. Francis, who "picked up worms from the way that they might not be trodden on."<sup>5</sup> To primitives of an opposite type this conduct appears ridiculous; while people amongst ourselves whose primitive disposition is akin to the Indian may see nothing but callous devilry in the action of the meat-eater or of the fox-hunter. Many people are primitive, it would seem, where their feeling for animals is concerned, who are not so in other respects.<sup>6</sup>

One solution of the problem, then, will be logically satisfying to a Hindoo, another to a Yorkshireman; while one will satisfy the Hindoo in a fat year, another in a year of bad harvests; one will suit the Yorkshireman in Yorkshire, another when he is in the jungle.

In each case there is bound to be a compromise. If the Hindoo were to refuse compromise, he and his tribe would go down before a tribe of tigers, rats, or even of caterpillars. "The unchecked multiplication of a few mice or rabbits would soon leave no standing room on earth."<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, if the Nimrods and the Roosevelts of the world refused compromise, and pursued their hunting instincts unchecked, there would soon be nothing left for them to hunt. The true sportsman is like that Boer hunter who took off his hat to a courageous antelope, instead of killing her, because she had fought so bravely to defend her calf.<sup>8</sup>

In real life we are never called upon to view a problem logically for the sake of logic. Logic is called in for

the sake of aiding some practical purpose. Thus the question we have been considering might occur as an individual moral problem, and the practical end in view might be, to arrive at a decision as to what someone, with a tender conscience was morally bound to do with regard to (1) the killing of vermin, or to (2) fox-hunting, or to (3) vegetarianism. Looked at afresh from this point of view we find with regard to (1) Killing vermin—

A basic moral feeling, often expressed symbolically as that Man was made in the image of God, whence it follows that he should not forfeit his birthright of life and development out of sympathy with, and compassion for, the lower animals, however much he love and admire, or even merely pity them.

The same superior value attaches in his eyes to the higher animals compared with the lower, so that if he were required to choose between the survival of dog and of squirrels, he would sacrifice squirrels. To a great extent human beings are actually offered such a choice between the survival of themselves and of the lower animals, and where they accept the above principle they do not hesitate. On these grounds it is decided to kill destructive vermin.

### (2) Fox-hunting—

We find no basic moral feeling impelling Man to the hunt. Its defence is this, that it is immoral to repress or stifle instincts that do harm if crushed, and with many people the instinct of the chase is one of these. We are left with the practical question, whether there is some other mode of gratifying this instinct which will inflict less injury. If so, we are bound to prefer it to the chase; if not, we are bound to tolerate the chase.

### (3) Vegetarianism—

The problem of vegetarianism opens out further questions.

(1) Can certain races of men survive and develop without animal food?



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(2) If they were to do so, would the welfare of animals be increased or diminished?

Morally there is much to be said both for and against vegetarianism; there is nothing to be said for neglecting to make the lives of those animals who serve Man in one way or another as pleasant as possible, and their deaths as painless.

So much for the problem as an individual one. But it might be a political problem which logic was called upon to solve, a question, for instance, of the expediency of prohibiting a cruel sport.

Is it socially desirable to make the sport in question illegal or no? We are here required to gauge the actual strength of the impulses involved; those which are sane, but primitive, on the one hand; and, on the other, those that are morbid, but which, at present, find a safety-valve in the sport in question. Can another outlet be provided, of greater social value? Thus cock-fighting might be stopped, where facilities could be given for football.

To be successful, the politician has to keep sight of the fact that effective legislation is that which follows the main lines of the nation's development. •

Particular questions of expediency have also to be taken into account. Lincoln would not risk destroying the Union, even to abolish slavery; and Gladstone would not abandon Home Rule, even to win an election. Where an advanced motive impels in a certain direction, there are always primitive motives urging in the same direction; and a politician may seem to his friends to be promoting the one, when his enemies regard him as exploiting the other. Nor does history always settle the point.

In the case we have been considering, of Man's attitude towards wild animals, we see both sets of motive, advanced and primitive. A primitive humanitarianism is conspicuous in the Eskimo, the Malay race, the Hindoo and many others. We also meet with what looks like

a primitive cruelty, in the North American Indian, the Aztecs of Mexico, the Papuans and the so-called Celt, though possibly this is always a derivative from repressed sexuality, rather than a primary impulse.

The rational kindness to animals of developed races results in conduct which is not unlike that of the kindly, impulsive primitive. Extremes meet, in the same way, in the treatment of children. It is a far cry from the untutored Eskimo to the adherents of the Montessori method; but their code of behaviour to the child is much the same. Till the child is twelve the Eskimo of certain tribes will not coerce it. The father may advise, exhort and entreat the tiresome little monkey of a boy or girl, but never force, still less punish.<sup>9</sup> The unconscious motive here is a primitive tender-heartedness, an identification of self with the beloved offspring; the alleged reason is that the child is possessed by the spirit of some dead person who would resent interference.

On the whole, however, the savage's treatment of animals and of children is less uniform than that of civilised Man, for he is more at the mercy of passing impulses. The same man will be fondly indulgent to his beast one day and brutally callous another, according to the mood of the moment. The civilised man will be neither the one nor the other, but will recognise both these extreme tendencies in himself, while he regulates his conduct by other higher impulses—by the desire to be just, social, and dependable in his behaviour, and by his capacity for standing at an animal's point of view while keeping it distinct from his own.

Another example of a logical problem which people are constantly called upon to settle, may be found in the questions raised by *individual* versus *social wealth*.

We have already suggested that the acquisitive or wealth-possessing instinct is at the same time one of the most powerful, and, in Christian countries, one of the least conscious. The ordinary British taxpayer, when settling his collective expenditure, illustrates the

primitive level of mind at which this instinct works. He is like those Chinese villagers who realised that their daughters' happiness demanded that the girls' feet should be unbound, yet did not unbind them, only petitioned the Viceroy for a law that might compel them to do so.<sup>10</sup> When they had got this law, no doubt they grumbled at having to obey it.

Problems concerned with wealth are, however, emerging from the unconscious, and it is common nowadays to hear individuals putting themselves the question, what they are morally bound to do with their incomes, *i. e.* how they can find a workable compromise between the acquisitive and the altruistic impulse; the desire, that is, to possess and enjoy riches, and the desire that others shall possess and enjoy them.

Conflicting tendencies, in this case too, are logically seen as rivals rather than enemies, and demand mutual adjustment of their several claims. The conflict is resolved by a compromise, a mode of life in which neither love of self nor love of neighbour goes unsatisfied, but which provides for a give and take between the two. The balance is struck differently in individual cases, according to individual nature and circumstances. One man may deny himself the pleasure of an aeroplane, in order to raise the wages, or repair the cottages, on his estate. Another may deny himself the satisfaction of feeding one more hungry child, in order to secure for himself a substantial daily dinner. In each case if the compromise come to is one which contents the individual, it must entail the minimum thwarting of impulse, both higher and lower. It is obvious, for example, that the same domestic economy could never satisfy both Dinah and Hetty in *Adam Bede*. To be tolerably happy, the one would need to spend a much larger proportion of income on clothes than the other.

It may be objected that were we to let ourselves realise our selfish instincts, we should act on no others.

In that case Society would have to control our actions, to prevent their anti-social effects, as it already does in many directions.

It is conceivable that there are men so deficient by nature in altruism, and so strong in love of self, that the satisfying solution of the problem of wealth<sup>2</sup> in their own case would be to keep all and give none. These are the kind of folk in whom, when they happen to be immensely wealthy, we take a primitive pride. We see them on the "movies" and in the magazines, as symbols of our own inordinate desires, gratified. When social development is sufficiently advanced we shall curtail their wealth, and it will be taken from them firmly but kindly, for they are not hated by the Have-nots, as are those less simple natures who keep their riches but do not enjoy them; who act selfishly but call it a regrettable necessity, and plead a meagre discontent in palliation of anti-social greed.

No sane person doubts that wealth, which nowadays means money, is one of the chief things that make people happy, and that the desire for it is one of the strongest of human impulses. The impulse needs no apology, nor need it have the mastery. Just because it is so powerful it is safer made conscious and so controlled.

Some people fail to make it conscious because they are afraid that it would lead them to excess if once admitted. They do not see that its admission is the first and indispensable step towards its civilisation. Others are as much afraid of their "good" unconscious tendencies as of their "bad." They dare not face their love of riches lest along with it they should find repressed a longing to sell all that they have and give to the poor.

This fear of the magic force of unconscious and primitive desire was illustrated lately by the panic which seized upon a section of the press after hearing of the advent of a certain temperance advocate. Here was one man coming, as he thought, to speak to a drunken nation on the beauty of abstinence and the evils of drink

and the newspapers trembled for "the trade." They trembled with reason, for a primitive vice may be overthrown for a time by an equally primitive enthusiasm for the opposite virtue. People who drink to excess are the very people most prone to "crowd suggestibility"; the unconscious forces swaying them may result in actions heroic as well as bestial. Temperance to be lasting, however, must be based on other grounds, the grounds of compromise.

We must not end this chapter without a word on the limits of compromise. Its possibility is based on the "soul of goodness in things evil," but, as we have already noticed, there is a kind of opposition in nature which admits of no compromise, "pairs of opposites" which in certain contexts are mutually exclusive. One or the other at any moment must be chosen. Such are the basic qualities of life and death, progress and stagnation, love and hate, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, truth and falsity.

Conflicting motives, when viewed as reconcilable, may be represented as A B C D. . . . in a limited space. There is only room for a limited total quantity. If we have more of A we must have less of B or C, and so on. They are the various indestructible characters of a growing organism; excessive development of one means defective development of another.

Conflicting motives when viewed as irreconcilable may be represented by A and not—A, B and not—B, C and not—C, in an unlimited space. They are the same indestructible characters of a growing organism, viewed on any particular occasion with reference to one and the same object, in which case "opposites" are mutually exclusive. We can have whatever is there, but as far as the same object is concerned we cannot at the same time have both A and not A. In so far as we have the one, we exclude the other. We cannot love a person and at the same time hate him. From this point of view love and hatred are mutually ex-

clusive sentiments, leading to contradictory actions. Othello hated Desdemona at one moment and loved her at another. At the moment of strangling her, hatred predominated, and it was hatred which prompted the deed (not love, as he averred), a hatred preceded by love and followed by remorse. It is common to hear love still claimed as the motive for conduct such as Othello's.<sup>11</sup>

Hatred is perhaps only a little less potent in daily conduct than is love, but it is feared, and consequently repressed into unconsciousness and called by euphemistic names. The "average man" is as frightened of his countrymen's capacity for hatred, as is the *Daily Mail* of their capacity for temperance enthusiasm. The second has power to ruin the trade, the first to destroy civilisation. But civilisation only becomes safe from its devastating influence when hatred is made conscious and brought within the purview of the will of a rational and self-conscious social mind, in which love has been adopted as a principle of conduct.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER XIII

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Bradby, *Life of Barnave*, 1915, I. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Monier Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, 1883, I. 315; Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, 3rd ed., II. 202. See also Job, ch. xxix.

<sup>3</sup> Blake, *Auguries of Innocence*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

<sup>4</sup> Countess Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, *op. cit.*, p. 265, and Monier Williams, *op. cit.*, I. 317.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas of Celano, *Lives of St. Francis*, trans. A. G. Ferrers Howell, 1908, p. 297.

<sup>6</sup> *e.g.* the woman who slaughters the most beautiful creatures in the world to trim her hat, and the woman who is the devoted slave of a "Pekie"

<sup>7</sup> Prof. J. A. Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Countess Evelyn, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>9</sup> V. Stefánsson, *My Life with the Eskimo*, 1913, pp. 395-401. It speaks volumes for the patient kindness of the Eskimos that they have no "swear-word" in their language. See Keane, *Man, Past and Present*, 1899, p. 374 n.

<sup>10</sup> Prof. E. A. Ross, *The Changing Chinese*, 1911, p. 181.

<sup>11</sup> See *subter*, p. 287.

## CHAPTER XIV

### LOGIC APPLIED TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The singers have sung and the builders have builded,  
The painters have fashioned their tales of delight;  
For what and for whom hath the world's book been gilded,  
When all is for these but the blackness of night?—WM. MORRIS.

SOCIAL problems assume a new character when we begin to look for the unconscious motives producing them. Conflict amongst these motives brings about the *impasse* which constitutes the problem. Conscious anti-social motives, evil actions deliberately planned must also, of course, be reckoned with. They supply problems for religion and politics; but we may well be chary of imputing deliberate purpose, seeing how seldom, in a collective capacity, men get what they wish, or do what they intend. The mutual injuries inflicted in war and peace by nations, classes and individuals, are only half intentional. The collective injuries of peace time are focussed in social problems, and one feature which strikes every thoughtful observer is the wide difference between the nation's will and its deed, the number of abuses that continue, condemned by all; the tendency, in short, for thought to outstrip action.

Miss Jane Harrison and Prof. Gilbert Murray have shown how in Ancient Greek religious ceremonies the ritual or action is outstripped by the reasons given for it.<sup>1</sup> The two belong to different stages of mental development, for the act originates in one plane of thought, while its explanation is an attempt to bring it into harmony

with another of later growth. Thus the cultivated Athenian killed a goat at the festival of Dionysus. He explained his action as a sacrifice offered to the god, and the reason he gave for choosing a goat was that the goat injured the vine, "the object of the god's especial care." In reality he killed a goat because his forefathers had done so, and *they* killed a goat, tearing it to pieces and eating it, because the goat was to them a god whose mana they thus imbibed.<sup>2</sup>

A similar anachronism is seen in the Mid-winter Festival of Fools, kept up in France as late as the eighteenth century and probably later. For some days priests and laity joined in a gross burlesque of the solemn rites of their Church. The reason advanced was the need of relaxation from effort, of a holiday from being good. The action was in reality a survival from pagan times, when twelve odd days were inserted in the calendar to enable the moon to catch up the sun, so that they might start the new year together. In the interval the gods were "off duty" and license reigned.<sup>3</sup>

Another instance, it may be surmised, is furnished by the modern Catholic when he sprinkles himself with holy water. His reasons are part and parcel of a developed mind—a mind whose "God is a spirit," so that "they who worship him must worship him in spirit." His action, however, is that of a primitive mind, and is a survival from his primitive ancestors, for whom water was a spirit, so that they who would be safe employed its magic properties to protect themselves against other more malicious spirits.<sup>4</sup>

Now this tendency for thought to belong to one stage of mental culture, while its contemporary action belongs to another and more primitive stage, is not confined to the sphere of religion, but is universal. It has a special bearing upon social behaviour, where it accounts for much inconsistency.

Wherever in a collective capacity people *think* one thing and *do* another, it will perhaps always be found



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that their action is the result of motives which are more primitive and more unconscious than is their corresponding thought. We need go no further than the decalogue for a striking example of this difference of level.

With regard to the sin of civil murder, we have reached a stage, perhaps, of complete consciousness, and hence of logical consistency. Thought, feeling, and action are in harmony on the subject. We think murder wrong and to be prevented, we feel abhorrence of it, and we do our best actually to prevent it. We no longer tolerate people killing one another as a custom, even in the duel. There is, perhaps, no limit to the sacrifices we would make, were they demanded, rather than permit murder to become customary again in England as it once was. In this respect we have advanced beyond our forefathers, amongst whom opinion was agreed in condemnation of the crime long before the necessary steps were taken to prevent it.

With our attitude towards murder contrast our attitude towards incest. Our professed abhorrence of incest is only a little less than our abhorrence of murder, but here thought and action are centuries apart. In practice we not only tolerate, but encourage it by overcrowding, by declining collectively to expend wealth on measures which would soon make it as obsolete as murder.

It may be said that there is nothing unconscious about this, when even orthodox clergymen of the State Church have called attention to the facts, and have urged action in the name of religion, but as a matter of fact, action tarries because we refuse to keep the anti-incest motives in consciousness.<sup>5</sup> We never put the case to ourselves thus: I will advocate that many families be obliged to continue to sleep five in a bed because I do not see how otherwise I am to remain as rich as I am.<sup>6</sup> If the case be so put we cannot approve it, so we banish the thought into unconsciousness. But if overcrowding were to induce, not incest, but murder, we should quickly clear

the slums, and hardly grudge the cost to ourselves of so doing.

Increased awareness of our own motives, then, would seem to be essential to the solving of social problems. Indeed, history shows that there is not enough deliberate callousness and selfishness in human nature to keep the gross abuses of any social and industrial system going, once they become recognised as abuses. They need to be fortified by spurious theory, safeguarded by an ostrich blindness, in order to withstand the assaults of humane desire. A better understanding of the unconscious mind and of the influence it has on the problems of life will leave "the forts of folly" and of crime less secure in their defence.

To a great extent human sympathy to-day is undeveloped, or repressed and dormant, enslaved by the imperfectly mastered acquisitive instinct. But so great is its power that a revolution would logically and inevitably follow in our social system were the rich, for example, to realise how the poor live.

Because such a revolution is feared, the rich unconsciously protect themselves against enlightenment. Especially do they refuse to see the self-seeking element in their own motives. Thus country employers of labour have been known to declare that cottagers—unlike their own cooks—can cook as well at open fireplaces as at closed ranges. In a waterless region in the Home Counties the squire and the parson still maintain that—unlike themselves—the villagers desire no better water for drinking and washing, than that of a dirty pond. In these instances, if sympathy and understanding were once to be admitted, expenditure of money and effort would be a logical consequence, in order to provide kitcheners and a well. The altruistic motive is beaten in the field, but still has power to exact a furtive homage in the fiction that other people enjoy deprivations which we ourselves should deem intolerable. "Call a spade a spade," and a stage comes when you cannot any longer

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use a shovel to do the spade's work. Call justice and love what they are, *i. e.* just and loving actions, and you can no longer let the acquisitive motive guide your conduct to your neighbour. The fiction, or the fallacy, that a shovel is a spade prolongs its misuse.

The typical attitude of employer to employed strikingly exhibits this fallacy. To take the case of that most familiar of employees, the charwoman. Before the war, her usual rate of pay in London was 2s. 6d. a day and food. More often than not, the charwoman has some one else dependent on her earnings—very often a child or two to support at home. This is one root fact of the situation. She necessarily and logically regards the lady who employs her somewhat as the savage regards a capricious god; dare not offend her in any way, lest the light of her countenance be withdrawn, and along with it the means of livelihood.

But the typical employer overlooks this basis of their relation. She does not even see that economic freedom is usually a condition of any other kind of freedom.

Led by the fallacy of *the wish*, she sees the charwoman as a contented and independent soul; influenced by *suggestibility* in the form of custom, she finds nothing amiss with the rate of pay; *self-centredness* makes her regard that charwoman as fortunate who works for any one so likeable as herself. A smattering of "economics" may lead her, under the sway of *authority*, to believe that she is compelled by a law of nature to pay just the wages she does. She overlooks that "love of neighbour" which is no less a law of nature, and one whose influence, when it becomes fully conscious, will revise the present economic code.

The charwoman, on her side, is induced to acquiesce in the position by the fallacy of *suggestibility*, as well as by that of *limited experience*. Orthodox religion may even bring *authority* to bear upon her case with the suggestion that her lot is one which it is her duty not to try to better.

Perhaps the foregoing paragraphs may be mistaken as ironical—the fault-finding of a crank with a hobby; but an illustration has purposely been chosen of a social and industrial injustice not generally recognised as such, and one which in the opinion of the writer will some day be remedied by increased attention to the logic of the unconscious mind.

Mr. and Mrs. Hammond have shown us how blind were most of the benevolent people of the eighteenth century to those harsh injustices around them which excite our own indignation and pity.<sup>7</sup> We, ourselves, are blind in just the same sort of way to just the same sort of things. We see little or nothing amiss in the typical case cited above. We do not see that for ourselves the hope of economic independence as the reward of effort is one essential condition of a happy life, and that this hope we withhold from our neighbour; that the customary wage is partly determined by motives which we condemn as evil—*i. e.* by selfishness and indolence.

It is conceivable that in the future we shall realise the wrong done, and not find counterbalancing motives to correct it. But normally, whenever the facts of a situation are seen, they are responded to with emotions such as eventually secure human progress. At present facts are not seen when low-paid industries are in question. We remain blind to certain marked features, ignorant of their origin, which would help us to understand their character.

Darwin showed just such a blindness as a young man, when he geologised in a valley of North Wales, without seeing the traces round him of a Glacial Epoch. He was familiar with glaciers and their configuration, but on this occasion he was not looking for their effects, and consequently missed them; though, as he said later, “a house burnt down by fire did not tell its story more plainly than did this valley.”<sup>8</sup> Similarly we investigate any low-paid industry—laundry-work for example—and do not see that its character and origin are explained

by the Great Ice Age of our social history—the eighteenth century. Certain striking features of this typical industry—its long hours and low wages—are survivals of that epoch, when the governing classes, having gained the monopoly of political power, could disregard the interests of other classes.<sup>9</sup> Thus it comes about that some women to-day wash other women's sheets, as well as their own, for wages that just keep them alive; and that those of us who have uneasy consciences, but are reluctant to wash sheets, advocate, not higher wages, but greater thrift.<sup>10</sup>

William James suggested that universal military service should be replaced by conscription in the army of labour. It may well be that the employer of the future will qualify for his post as employer by doing the work of the various grades of labour whom he employs. Sympathy extends just so far as does imagination, and many people, perhaps, can only imagine the lives of workers by living them. It was not the shopping public who saw that shop assistants needed chairs. If royalty owners had worked in the mines they might take a very different view of "nationalisation"; mistresses who have done their own housework under the conditions of the ordinary maid have changed their attitude towards "the domestic problem"; and annoyance at increasing prices would not be the predominant sentiment with regard to the laundry bill if West End ladies were themselves to ply the calender.

We are still so far from industrial democracy that such a picture appears fantastic, yet, maybe, it is but a forecast of what must happen if the English nation is to survive, as only those societies have yet survived who abandoned mutual struggle for mutual aid.

Nothing in history is more certain than that lack of co-operation between component groups destroys a social whole. Dr. Dill has shown the downfall of the Roman Empire to be largely the result of failure on the part of rich and poor to pull together.<sup>11</sup> He describes

the governing classes as on the whole humane and cultivated, their intellectual and æsthetic interests predominant. They lived in a world of cultured tastes and refined emotion, admired by all, and emulated by the *parvenu* Goth.' But the world of their own working-classes was far different, and so little satisfying to the demands of human nature that when the crisis came it was not found worth fighting for. Class cleavage broke up the empire.

It may be that we shall go the way of the Romans—there is much in our present-day conditions to suggest it—but the civilisation of the future, whether Japanese, Teuton or Bantu, will be one in which class selfishness gives place to a larger patriotism, race hatred to the feeling of human fellowship. It is impossible to doubt it, not because it is what the moralist would desire, but because it is what the logical observer of mankind is forced to conclude, assuming the main direction of progress to be constant.

For the line of progress has hitherto been one of altruism extending its bounds and becoming increasingly self-conscious. We see a persistent choice of the ethically good, along with a growing capacity to distinguish good from evil.

In the case of any particular nation it is conceivable that the will to choose the good may fail. It may be that in our own case the time will come when we see the path of progress and do not take it, realise the wrong done and do not remedy it; but remain unwilling or unable to do the hard things approved by conscience—that sum-total of the higher, co-ordinating, desires and impulses which guide the life.

Hitherto in our national history social goodwill has been equal, eventually, to each new task imposed upon it by enlightenment, though the response has often been slow. The practice, for instance, of using children instead of brushes for sweeping chimneys, was felt to be cruel for more than forty years before it was abolished,<sup>12</sup>

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during which time the children's champion, Bennett, and other humane people, were agitating against it, both in Parliament and outside. But it would not have taken forty years to convince that generation of ordinarily humane people, had their unconscious motives been self-revealed. The benevolence which led Mrs. Montagu to give an annual dinner to the "sooty little agents of our most blessed luxury" <sup>13</sup> would then have led her to spend the money on having her chimneys altered, and the effort on persuading her friends to alter theirs.

Merely to see the subconscious motive of inhuman action is sometimes enough to check it, always enough to draw its sting. Hence one obstruction to social reform will be removed with a more general recognition of actuating motives.

At present the unconscious bias which incapacitates a man from reasoned judgment on a particular subject, is often the ground of his special interest in it, so that questions such as the Irish come to be settled by the very men least qualified for the task. The honest rebel, for example, who has not yet slain the tyrant in his subconscious self, sees latent tyranny in each coercive measure, and faithfully opposes many an urgent reform. The man who has never unmasked his own love of power, his desire to control the action of others, will be found supporting every proposal to coerce an alien race or class.

Mr. R. H. Tawney has shown the immense power of the acquisitive instinct in our social structures and customs.<sup>14</sup> Reading the signs of the times he foretells a day when this motive will be subordinate to its rival, altruism. At present altruistic instinct is given little social scope and is largely repressed. Certain stock motives are in fashion, so that if a man lack them he conceals the deficiency. One such is the desire to "get on," to "do well" in some profession, trade or business, and to make a good income. All our social forms and customs have this desire in view.

But undoubtedly the motive of "love of friends" and the "desire to make friends" is as great, though less provided for. The Roman Cornelia counted her children more valuable than wealth, and most men count their friends as more desirable than a large income. But at present, though we can reckon on a man putting forth his best efforts to secure a larger salary for himself, there are many practical people who scout the idea that his efforts would be just as great on behalf of his fellows. Yet the altruistic motive is as old as human nature,—on the instinctive plane much older,—it has played no less important a part in the process of civilisation, and it is still developing. It would be as illogical to exclude it, as it would be to consider it supreme at the moment, whatever be the auguries for its future supremacy.

We may here take a brief glance from a logical point of view at a few of the social questions which to-day are in dispute. *The Nationalisation of the Coal-mines* is one which has recently been threshed out in public, but not so as to close the controversy. The motives displayed as operative for and against rationalisation are briefly the following—

*The desire of the community as a whole.*

- (1) To get as much coal as is wanted for as low a price as possible.
- (2) To get it with as little waste as possible (for the sake of future generations).
- (3) To get it by methods which will conduce as much as possible to the efficiency as citizens of the people concerned in the industry.

*The desire of the miners as a class.*

- (4) To get as high wages as they can, and as good conditions of living for themselves and families.
- (5) To get as much choice as possible with regard to the work they do, its amount and the method of doing it.



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*The desire of the mine owners as a class.*

- (6) To remain as rich and as socially and politically powerful as they are, and if possible to become richer and more powerful.

The logically ideal arrangement would be one in which each of these six desires was fulfilled. In so far as they conflict, the needs of the commonwealth as a whole come first—since in this case the whole is greater than the part. It may be remarked in passing that there is a loss in citizenship value to the community, entailed by each child reared under conditions which are physically or morally deleterious, a loss counted by tens amongst the children born to a family inheritance of vast wealth,<sup>15</sup> and by millions amongst the children born to an inheritance of two rooms, in which the washing is perpetually hung up to dry.

The *drink question* and the *problem of prostitution* may be glanced at in the same way. What are the factors which actually bring about drunkenness in its most familiar form, consequent upon the sale of alcoholic drinks in licensed houses? We notice sections of the community influenced by—

(1) A craving for drink, which is either (a) a primitive appetite habitually indulged, or (b) a neurotic symptom (dypsomania proper).

(2) A desire for the social pleasure of company, a pleasure for which their homes give no scope.

(3) A desire to escape the actual, to forget dull and unpleasant surroundings, and to gain that feeling of freedom which accompanies abandonment to impulse.

(4) The desire of the manufacturer, merchant and retailer, and those who finance them, to sell as much intoxicating liquor as possible, so as to increase their wealth and incidentally their social and political power.

In reviewing these various causes of drunkenness we see that a neurotic craving is curable, a primitive gross

appetite is easily controlled by society, to the advantage of its owner; and the remaining desires which prompt a man to drink are capable of satisfaction by other methods.

We find no demand on the part of drinkers for public-houses which shall sell intoxicants only, and extremely little for the public-house of a type so commonly met with where the law is disregarded and customers served who are drunk.

People give up drunkenness when the opportunity is afforded for enjoying company at home. One does not see drunken men on Saturday nights thronging the public-houses, nor reeling down the residential streets of the West End or the well-to-do Suburbs, because the residents can entertain their friends at home; nor do they urgently need to escape the actual, which is less monotonous and unpleasant; or if they do, they find other and various ways of escaping it.

There remains the desire for riches on the part of "the trade," which, more than any other cause, is responsible for the grosser forms of our national vice, since it alone produces the ordinary ill-managed public-house.

• If it could be made more profitable to sell the tea and milk, the beef and plum-pudding which customers demand, than it is to sell the beer and spirits, then drunkenness would be practically abolished, and general nutrition improved, for food hunger is also a primitive appetite, but less injurious to indulge. If it were even made profitable to supply the demand for food along with drink, drunkenness would be much diminished, as has been recently shown in Carlisle.

We have here a conflict between the interests of the community and the interests of a group, namely, the group composed of makers and dealers and those who finance them. This group is powerfully re-inforced by the owners of slum property; for the ill-managed "pub" round the corner provides a necessary anodyne to the squalor and discomfort of the slum tenement. Many

people are induced to live in these tenements, and to pay the rent which constitutes the interest on capital, by facilities for indulging their animal appetites.

Drunkenness is like the dancing of primitive religions, or the "panes et circenses" of the Roman proletariat, and the occasional feasts given to the under-nourished by the well-fed. It helps to reconcile the "have-nots" to their lot, and it is (unconsciously to a great extent) condoned by the "haves," who oppose education for the same reasons, because they wish to remain rich and powerful, and know intuitively that if they are to do so, the manual worker on his part must remain ignorant, superstitiously religious, and within limits addicted to drunkenness, in short, that he must be primitive if he is to be exploitable.

*The problem of prostitution* is even more than most social problems involved in the obscurity of unconscious motives. What are the motives actually operative that bring about the custom of prostitution as seen in London? We notice that those taking part in it are actuated by—

(1) The tendency of that drunkenness we have just been considering, to inflame animal appetites and weaken rational self-control. (The close connection between prostitution and ill-conducted licensed houses was conspicuous during the war.)

(2) The abnormal and neurotic craving of a number of people (probably of more men and fewer women) to gratify sexual appetite apart from the feeling of affection.

(3) The normal desire on the part of many women, born poor, for a life of physical comfort and æsthetic satisfaction, which can be attained by "going on the streets," but in their case in no other way.

(4) The desire of all those people whose "capital" is sunk in the business of "vice," or in collateral trades, to grow or to remain rich. Collateral interests include house property in certain districts, certain shops, places of entertainment, and licensed houses.

It will be remarked that by far the most important factor in the problem is one for education to deal with. We have assumed a fact known to many, and emphasised by psycho-analysts especially, but of which perhaps the average layman is still only half aware, that the desire for sexual intercourse in the normal human being (as in the normal higher animal) goes along with, and is part of, the instinct of "sexual love" in its narrow sense, and that this includes a more or less permanent relation with a sexually attractive person. In the man who resorts to prostitutes, one factor of sexual love is taken from the total animal instinct and cultivated on its own account, while the remaining factors are habitually repressed.

It is not the sexual debauchee who is the main support of prostitutes. The debauchee may be compared with the gluttonous Roman, Vitellius, who indulged the pleasure of eating with disregard to its normal setting in the instinct of hunger. A man is led by hunger to eat his fill in company with his fellows, and he enjoys the taste of food and the feeling of renewed vigour which ensues. The emperor who used his vomitorium forwent half the pleasures of the table and specialised in the other half.

But prostitution meets a demand of another kind. Its supporters might be compared to young Romans who could not afford Vitellius' gluttony, or who went hungry because custom, good form, or prudence, demanded it of them; but who found a way to gratify the pleasure of taste by sucking lozenges. Unsatisfied cravings told them that something still was wanting, but they clung to their palliative, and all the more for the encouragement it received from their military authorities and the discouragement of fanatics.

If this diagnosis be mistaken, if Man alone among the higher animals have an instinct for passing and unselective sexual intercourse with any attractive individual other than his "mate" for the time being; then the problem is how to gratify this instinct with the minimum

of social injury, instead of, as at present, with almost the maximum, through the spread of venereal disease. If, however, the view here taken be correct, the problem is chiefly how to cure a neurotic habit, and above all how to prevent its manufacture in childhood and youth.

The whole question needs to be raised from the region of "repression" appropriate to a stage of mental development which Man is outgrowing. While self-control was new to the race, and love of love still undeveloped, it was inevitable that "the man of burning thought and aspiration"—the moral leader—should regard sexual questions as did Sir Galahad, with one object in view—to keep himself free from the tyranny of the flesh. These questions have now to be faced anew at a higher level. Sir Galahad is obsolete. It is as though murder were being done, murder of men and women and little children, and the only point which engaged his attention and that of his admirers, was how, for the sake of their own purity, to keep themselves from joining in.

To-day there are signs that a saner, more humane, and more developed treatment of the problem is taking the place of that mixture of silence, pretence and regularisation of crime within limits, which the English gentleman has found so personally helpful.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER XIV

<sup>1</sup> J. E. Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*, Homo University Library, 1913, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, 3rd ed., I. 23 and II., 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *The Scapegoat*, 3rd ed., pp. 337 and 345.

<sup>4</sup> An authorised "Catholic Prayer Book" of 1898, gives the following: "Holy Water.—The Church blesses water . . . and prays in the blessing of it that it may put to flight demons, drive away disease, and free the house and property of the faithful . . . from . . . pestilent spirits, noxious air, and other dangerous influences." The Church's blessing gains the co-operation of the water-spirit.

<sup>5</sup> See *Life and Labour in London*, Chas. Booth, 1903, final vol., p. 172.

<sup>6</sup> " In Marylebone, Southwark, St. Pancras, Holborn, Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Stepney and Finsbury upwards of 30 per cent. of the inhabitants live in one- or two-roomed dwellings " (in 1900). L. G. Chiozza Money, *Riches and Poverty*, ed. 1911, p. 215.

<sup>7</sup> See, e. g. the treatment of the textile operatives who were allowed to starve in a time of increased national wealth. *The Skilled Labourer*, 1919, J. L. and B. Hammond.

<sup>8</sup> *Life and Letters*, 1887, I. 58.

<sup>9</sup> See *The Village Labourer*, J. L. and B. Hammond.

<sup>10</sup> The Laundry Trade Board Act of November 1919 shortened hours, and pulled wages up to a basis of 8½d. an hour, a wage which represented a pre-war wage of less than 4d. an hour.

<sup>11</sup> *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*, 1899. See, e. g. pp. 154, 211, 212, 245, 320-1.

<sup>12</sup> *The Town Labourer*, J. L. and B. Hammond, 1917, pp. 176-93.

<sup>13</sup> Agnes Repplier, *A Happy Half-Century*, 1908, p. 63.

<sup>14</sup> *Hibbert Journal*, March 1919.

<sup>15</sup> See A. Ponsonby, *The Camel and the Needle's Eye*, (Fifield), p. 179.

## CHAPTER XV

### LOGIC AND THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM

I have invoked thee, O Sun, in the midst of the high heavens. Thou art in the shadow of the cedar and thy feet rest on the summits. . . . Thou who annihilatest falsehood, who dissipatest the evil influence of wonders, omens, sorceries, dreams, evil apparitions, who annihilatest men and countries that devote themselves to fatal sorceries, I have taken refuge in thy presence.—*Chaldean Hymn to the Sun-god.*

ONE of the outstanding problems of life, which every now and then assumes a special prominence, is that of spiritualistic phenomena. We propose in this chapter to take a bird's-eye view of the subject; to apply to it the logical method of enquiry which has been described, and to indicate a line of approach along which the next enlightening discovery may be looked for.

The subject is one upon which it is notoriously difficult to be logical. Like religion, or politics, or Man's attitude to inferior species, its phenomena are invested with symbolic value. To begin to understand them, some idea must be formed of the mental backgrounds against which they are placed in minds of various types.

We notice three of these types in the typical outsider, the believer, and the sceptic; for each of whom it is extraordinarily difficult to place himself at the other's points of view—an essential preliminary, to logical discussion.

The first possesses a temperament like that of Marcus Aurelius, who adorned his mind "with simplicity, and

with indifference towards the things that lie between virtue and vice." For him, too, it is "enough to remember that law rules all."<sup>1</sup> He is supremely conscious of the mystery and wonder of the world, of the miracle of life in all its forms. He sees time in a setting of eternity, things known, as a foretaste of things to be revealed; nor can he ever forget that "we are such stuff as dreams are made of." The most real things to him are strong emotions. Freedom, revenge, love, beauty, whichever it may be, this it is which for him lends substance to the shadow, and tests the actuality of dreams. A spirit dwelling among spirits, he holds converse daily with spirits of the dead. They speak to him across the ages, their thoughts and passions recorded all around him. He does not find it difficult to believe that after death the soul survives in time and space; nor that it can communicate with other souls which still inhabit bodies; but if it be the dead, indeed, who speak at séances, he is disappointed at what they say. For it is the things of the spirit which interest him supremely, and there is little of this in the recorded utterances of spirits, but much of the physical ailments of the flesh. Thus the outsider keeps an open mind with regard to the explanation of the facts, but the facts themselves he often finds tedious and trivial. The problem offered by death is, after all, but one of many, and not the greatest; nor if evidence of survival were to be accepted would it relieve the burden of mystery that weighs on life.

Our second type,—the believer,—when credulous, is a materialist converted, one to whom, in his unregenerate days, nothing was real but appetite and *£ s. d.*; who only talked of what could be bought and sold and valued in money, only accepted as true the facts of science and the evidence of law courts. All else he regarded as the silly fable of inferior minds. They something happened—something for which there was no legal or scientific explanation, under his very nose—



and straightway the marvellous was admitted; henceforth Saul also is among the prophets. Such an one quotes "Hamlet to Horatio," and those who do not believe in ghosts he classes as materialists along with his former self.

But the best known type of believer is of a different stamp, a man who finds life good, and who, though not unmindful of eternity, yet lives essentially in time. His longing for perfection—that master aim of human progress—clothes itself in temporal forms. Nothing satisfies him which is incomplete, and what completion is conceivable to lives that ended prematurely? The mystery of death for him is the one outstanding problem of life. If this could be settled favourably, his *nunc dimittis* might be sung, all else is secondary. Thus he ardently longs for evidence to put the matter beyond a doubt, and when it comes it is like a reprieve. If credentials tell me I may live, I shall not hasten to throw doubt upon their authenticity. The disbeliever is seen by him as one who tries to persuade others that life is nugatory, Man's dearest hope delusion.

And yet our third type, the disbeliever, is like-minded with himself; for, setting aside the crude materialist already noticed—(a *rara avis*, in spite of the propaganda launched at him)—the sceptic also is one who invests the facts with religious significance. His god is Reason, but, like other timid worshippers, he dares not trust him utterly, nor ceases to fear, lest after all he prove imperfect. He meets this cowardly doubt by cultivating loyalty, refusing, if need be, like a hero, to believe the evidence of his senses. Should his god have little weaknesses, he for one will never admit the fact. For him "reason rules all," but, mark you, it is he who decides what is reasonable. He finds it unreasonable for tables to lift themselves, and for Prof. James in the spirit to have lost his wit and wisdom, therefore these things are "miracles" which "do not happen."

To men of all three types a table suspended in the air is a symbol. The sceptic sees in the incident a god of reason impudently defied by those who deal with spooks. The believer takes it as a sign from "the other side" that his loved ones yet live. To the outsider it is a symbol of Man's incurable frivolity, which sets him cracking nuts in a dark corner when a step beyond are mountains and sunshine and things that really matter.

The facts are subjectively coloured by each so as to represent certain truths of deep spiritual significance. We may probe their physical content—*Is* the table suspended? What is the point of application of the suspending force?—but so long as criticism of their objective value be taken to impugn their subjective truth, no amount of proof or disproof will alter men's opinions of them. Witches are objectively unreal, but, as we have seen, nothing could ever convince Wesley of the unreality of witches, because he looked on them as symbols of an unseen world. He could not begin to be logical where witchcraft was concerned, and there are people to-day in like case with regard to spiritualism. They will only abandon it when they have found some other expression for the truths they justly prize, or hold those truths, perhaps, with a degree of faith which gives men courage to be seekers; to look for their faith's objective counterpart, not fabricate it.

Let us imagine some one, with a more open mind than any of our types, to set about investigating spiritualism, and let us follow in his wake with a rapid survey of the subject.

By spiritualism we mean communication between spirits of the dead, and living people.

(1) In this chapter we shall look at certain characteristics of these supposed communications, which in our view throw light upon their essential character.

(2) In the next we shall notice the "spirit" theory usually accepted as accounting for them, and we shall touch upon its history and development; (3) lastly, we

shall bring forward the only rival explanation, viz. the so-called *sub-liminal* theory, brought up to date by psycho-analysis; and we shall consider a line of enquiry suggested by it.

First, then, as to certain striking features of spiritualism: we notice that in every case in which the spirits of the dead appear they invariably make use of go-betweens or mediums. They do not communicate through "just any one," nor through the people they loved best on earth, nor through people of kindred souls with their own; but always through people of a special nervous temperament, sometimes spoken of as psychics or "sensitives," sometimes as "mediums" (who will henceforth be referred to here as mediums).

These *mediums* are distinct and recognisable as a class, as are, for instance, poets. Just as a man may have something of the poet in him, so he may have some mediumistic gifts; but if we hear that So-and-so was a poet, we know, roughly speaking, both the nature and the limit of his talents. Perhaps he concentrated on drama, or produced "vers libres"; but, in any case, a sense of rhythm was his, and a vision of beauty, and passionate feeling, along with a power of conveying it in words, and this whether he were black or white or yellow, a denizen of the twentieth century or a dweller in the court of Nebuchadnezzar.

Just so with mediums. They have belonged to every race and period; as citizens they have been widely different—have included, for example, the saint Theresa, the rascal Cellini, the prophet Wesley, and the scoundrel Rasputin; but as mediums they have all been alike, have done, within a little, the same kind of things, suffered the same experiences. In their presence and through their agency, strange and unaccountable occurrences took place; again not "just any" strange and wonderful things, but a particular limited set, varying little with time and circumstance.

Thus any one attending a séance to-day may look to

see tables move themselves, but not pocket-handkerchiefs; the medium's body may become buoyant and rise from the ground, but water will not turn to ice with a thermometer above freezing. He may expect luminous splodges to hover in the air, but not green triangles. Should the medium be a powerful one, faces and hands may appear and disappear, or even human figures, but they will not be the figures of babies, nor must he expect feet instead of hands.

The same distinctive character and the same limited range, is noticeable in spirit-communications, whether these come by spirit "raps," trance utterance, automatic writing, or the visions of clairvoyance. They may include facts known only to the deceased and sometimes verifiable, or hidden truths of science which are not verifiable. They will not enlighten us on any point of intrinsic interest, nor forestall the scientific discoveries of the morrow.

Thus the mental picture of the chemical atom has changed of late years, from one of separate impenetrable balls to one of groups of pulls or forces, but clairvoyeurs have not yet seen it in the new manner.<sup>2</sup>

At the present day the bacteriologist describes the soil of Mother Earth as "a honeycombed structure whose dark recesses are inhabited by a teeming population, so near to us and yet so hopelessly beyond our ken that we can only form the dimmest picture of what the inhabitants are like and how they live."<sup>3</sup> A suitable microscope is eagerly awaited, but meanwhile clairvoyeurs give no assistance. Yet the subject comes within their scope.

For a picture of a typical medium we may turn to the following description of a Hindu Ascetic or "Yogi." "The Yogi may not see or hear what passes round him . . . but he has intuition of things which his neighbours cannot see or hear. He becomes so buoyant . . . that gravitation . . . has no influence on him. He can walk and ascend to the sky as if he were

suspended under a balloon. He can by this intuitive process inform himself of the mysteries of astronomy and anatomy, and of all things, in fact, that may be found in any of the different worlds. He may call to recollection the events of a previous life. He may understand the language of the brute creation. He may obtain an insight into the past and future. He may discern the thoughts of others. He may vanish at pleasure, and, if he chooses to do so, enter into his neighbour's body and take possession of his living skin." <sup>4</sup>

This particular class of medium, be it noted, does not receive communications from the dead, because re-incarnation, in his view, leaves none such unprovided with a body; but wherever dead people are thought to continue a bodiless existence, one of the recognised functions of the medium is to receive their communications. It is a function of which they have a monopoly, reminding one of the Post Office.

We see, then, that mediums are a distinct class of people with definite gifts; we shall next enquire, where, or under what circumstances, are they to be met with?

In the case of primitive peoples they are met with everywhere, while with some races mediumship is practically universal, but it becomes less common as civilisation advances, till amongst ourselves to-day it is regarded as a peculiar or abnormal gift.

One gathers from reports that mediumistic or occult practises are most common amongst the aboriginal peoples of Siberia,<sup>5</sup> but they are also common amongst the negroes of West Africa, the Indians of America, the Eskimoes, Fijians, Polynesians, and Melanesians.<sup>6</sup> A few typical examples may be quoted.

We read that among certain West African negroes the spirits of the dead speak, sometimes through the official priest, sometimes through any lay man or woman capable of being "possessed." <sup>7</sup>

Among the Shoshoni and Paiute Indians in the 'nineties,

we are told that a thousand people would sometimes take part in a religious dance, and "when the dancers were worn out . . . their medicine men would shout that they could see the faces of departed friends moving about the circle." <sup>8</sup>

The dead kings of the Baganda, we hear, live in cells dug in their temple floors, and occasionally they give advice to their successors, each speaking through the mouth of a prophet who reproduces his very tone and gestures.<sup>9</sup> But it is needless to multiply instances.

The next striking feature to which we would call attention, is that the medium's activities are attributed sometimes to spirits of the dead, sometimes to other agencies. The case may be put in another way: The medium is a person who, under favourable conditions, displays certain abnormal or supernormal powers, such as producing raps, or causing objects to move by the tension of a muscle; speaking in a trance, and writing automatically. In some cases, but not always, these phenomena are claimed, by the agent producing them, to be the work of spirits of the dead. In other cases they are claimed to be the work of other agencies.

Let us look for a moment at what the phenomena exactly are, and to what various agencies they are attributed. They include *things seen*, such as hands, faces and lights; *things heard*, such as raps, thuds, crashes, rustlings, scratchings, and vague, indefinable noises; *things felt*, such as pushes and touches (gentle or violent), cold, clammy sensations, and sensations like those produced by a current of air; *things thought*, such as ideas coming suddenly into the head which seem not to be one's own, or coming with intense conviction; *things done*, such as causing movement of objects by merely tightening the muscles, jerking convulsively, and automatic actions of all sorts (*i. e.* actions done without the performer knowing what he is doing, and sometimes without his knowing that he is doing anything at all).

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We meet with these activities in well-marked groups of cases, and in each group they are attributed to some particular agency. We will here glance at some of the leading groups with the agency imputed in each case.

### ABNORMAL PSYCHIC PHENOMENA <sup>10</sup>

CLASS OF CASE.	IMPUTED AGENCY.
1. Spiritualistic Séances and Psychical Research Séances.	Spirits of the dead and the subliminal Self.
2. Hypnotic Trance.	Whatever Agency the hypnotist may suggest.
3. States of Intoxication.	Formerly gods or spirits, nowadays "the lower self."
4. Nervous and Mental Disorders.	Various specific agents, often living people, near relations or enemies, or the latest invention to impress the popular imagination, such as aeroplanes.
5. Demon Possession. (Once common in England, still common in China.)	Demons or evil spirits, including spirits of the dead.
6. Witchcraft. (Still common in a large part of the world.)	In Christian countries the Devil and his subordinate demons; in other countries devils. (In both cases they act through malevolent men and women as their agents.)
7. Crowd Religion. (Religious Dances and Revivals.)	God, or the particular god who is being worshipped at the moment.
8. Everyday Experiences of certain Primitive Peoples.	Spirits, including spirits of the dead.
9. Religious Mysticism. (e.g. in mediæval England and modern India.)	The particular god, saint, or hero who is the object of devotion at the moment.

Consideration of these cases shows that the same strange phenomenon might be attributed to one agency or another according to the circumstances of its production and the ideas in the mind of the medium producing it. An illustration may make this clearer. The other day an educated woman, sitting writing, suddenly found her pen writing automatically. It was a novel experience, weird, unaccountable and a little frightening. She was

alone at the time, and mildly wondered if she were going off her head. Her pen wrote, amongst other things :

1. "*A mastermanic withdrawal from the scheme of revolutionary progress with Empedocles glorified at the outset.*"

And then—

2. "*The night the casement curtain closed in amethystine dye. That night the rooms we know were sold. . . . You ask the reason why?*"

Supposing she had written these sentences at a séance, the writer felt she could easily have imagined the spirit of George Meredith to have been guiding her hand in the first, and in the second, the spirit of some street musician—for so it seemed to her.

She was afraid. Supposing her fear had been heightened by suggestion, it might have amounted to panic. Then the jargon would have assumed a sinister aspect and have seemed to express a dread foreboding, the message of a malicious spirit or demon, possessing her hand and arm.

Supposing at the same time there had been some neighbour she feared and mistrusted, who had a marked influence over her, she might have been convinced that this strange happening was her neighbour's doing, might have thought herself bewitched.

On the other hand, had she been enthusiastically religious, in a mood of confidence or exaltation, a suggestion from fellow-worshippers might have given the cryptic utterances the appearance of divine warnings. They would have seemed directions from heaven with regard to the conduct of her affairs, an intimation, perhaps, to withdraw from some new-fangled scheme, or to sell house property.

As it was, unaided by suggestion, she merely wondered what they signified; but on ensuing nights their phrases came into her dreams, showing particular and private associations in the background of her mind, and leaving her in no doubt as to their import.



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### NOTES TO CHAPTER XV

<sup>1</sup> VII. 31, Long's trans.

<sup>2</sup> See *Chemical Discovery and Invention in the Twentieth Century*, Sir Wm. A. Tilden, 1916, pp. 227-8, 240. Cf. *Occult Chemistry*, by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbetter, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. J. E. Russell, quoted in *Exploitation of Plants*, Oliver and others, 1917, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. K. M. Banerjea, *Dialogues on the Hindu Philosophy*, 1861, pp. 69, 70.

<sup>5</sup> Miss Czaplicka, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Frazer, *Golden Bough*, *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, 3rd ed., I. 74, II., 192, and *Folk Lore in the Old Testament*, II. 535-7.

<sup>8</sup> F. M. Davenport, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-8.

<sup>9</sup> Frazer, *Folk Lore in the Old Testament*, II. p. 533.

<sup>10</sup> The following are a few references suggested for studying the subject—

For Class (1) *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research and Literature on Spiritualism*.

„ „ (2) See literature of Hypnotism and Secondary Personality, and especially C. G. Jung, *Collected Papers*, 2nd ed., p. 30.

„ „ (3) Frazer, *Taboo, etc.*, 3rd ed., p. 248.

„ „ (4) Janet, *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria*, 1907.

„ „ (5) *Demon Possession*, by Dr. Nevius, 1897, and chap. ix. of Prof. Monier Williams, *op. cit.*

„ „ (6) *A History of Witchcraft in England, 1558-1718*, by W. Notestein, 1911.

„ „ (7) F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, 1905.

„ „ (8) M. A. Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia*, 1st ed., p. 308, and F. M. Davenport, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-24; Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, 1897, see pp. 444 and 509.

„ „ (9) *Life of Blessed Henry Suso*, Dean Inge, Introduction; Dr. Brewer's *Dictionary of Miracles*.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LOGIC AND THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM (*contd.*)

What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?—ST. MATT. XI. 7.

WE have now to consider the "spirit" theory, which explains mediumistic phenomena in general, including communications purporting to be from the dead.

At a certain stage of mental development in the race, all striking phenomena whatever are put down to "spirits." The primitive thinks of every object as having a spirit, a sort of shadowy double of itself, the source of its activity and of its being.<sup>1</sup> If a stone should roll down the hillside, a spirit moves it; if it should remain at rest, a spirit keeps it so.

At this level of thought a man's varying moods are evidence of different spirits which possess him in turn, or possess his separate limbs, as the case may be.<sup>2</sup> "The sense of personality," says Mr. Pearsall Smith, "the existence of men as separate individuals, is one of the latest developments of human thought."<sup>3</sup> Till this sense is acquired the spirits do everything, but with increased self-control and the feeling that a man governs his own actions, the spirits are thrown out of work.

Jobs, however, are found for them here and there, and for a long time they continue to be busy wherever people act automatically, or urged by impulses beyond control. Thus there is a world-wide belief that sneezing is the work of a spirit, a divine or supernatural agent, while the words "giddy" and "dizzy" originally

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meant "possessed by a god." <sup>4</sup> Drunkards and madmen were long regarded as thus "possessed."

Nowadays the self is felt to be the source of all the impulses, even the most unaccountable, or if any be assigned to a supernatural agency, we choose one of an up-to-date pattern, such as "Economic Necessity," or "Human Nature."

Impulse has lost its mystery, but we are still mightily puzzled by automatic actions of the trance variety. Should it be suggested, in any case, that these are caused by spirits, the claim is listened to with respect, provided that the acts in question have symbolic value. We have seen that modern Spiritualism on its subjective side embodies deep and vital truths (as does also its counterpart anti-spiritualism). On its objective side, however, it would seem to be a survival from a stage of mental evolution which in the main is outgrown.

The theory of spirit-activity is rejected on logical grounds, not because it fails to explain the facts; it explains them all, and logically, as every primitive theory has always done. It is rejected because it is not in harmony with current notions concerning the rest of our universe of thought and of things, nor with a feeling for relative values. Its flaw, is that of savage philosophy in general, and "lies not in its reasoning, but in its premisses, its conception of the nature of life." <sup>5</sup> If the theory of Spiritualism proper be also rejected, it is on the same grounds.

We are sometimes asked to disbelieve in Spiritualism on the ground that it is bad for people who believe in it—a type of reason which we have seen to be thoroughly illogical. It may indeed be a sound enough reason for avoiding séances, though it is doubtful whether their attendance is more of a symptom or a cause of the harm in question. A repressed or ill-balanced individual taking up with Spiritualism is likely to relapse to unconscious and primitive levels of mind. Such relapse is like indulgence in dissipation—a man cannot

always pull himself up. If he let himself think primitively on certain subjects he may find himself giving rein to instincts of one sort or another which are usually repressed. Communication with the dead may be dearly gained if it increase nervous derangement—a feature which should neither be glossed over with a spiritualistic hymn, nor exaggerated with an anti-spiritualistic sermon.

This brings us to our rival theory, which is based upon the connection between functional nerve disease and “psychic phenomena” of all sorts, including spirit communications.

The closeness of the connection may be brought out by considering the phenomenon of *convulsions*. A glance at our nine classes shows convulsions to be characteristic of the whole field; they occur frequently in seven groups out of the nine, while in the remaining two (*séances* and hypnotism) they are not unknown. We read of that most refined and normal of mediums, Mrs. Piper, that she used to pass into the trance state with slight convulsions,<sup>6</sup> and in the case of hypnotism we read of fits occurring under the treatment of unskilful or ignorant operators.<sup>7</sup>

Closely akin to convulsions is that reckless and indecent behaviour, out of keeping with the medium's normal personality, which also would seem to be a universal accompaniment of psychic phenomena (except, of course, in hypnotism, where the subject is under the control of the hypnotist). Behaviour of this sort is well known to show a lack of mental balance—a failure in nervous co-ordination—and it may not be amiss to trace its characteristic appearance in our various groups.

In reports of *séances*, unseemly utterances are naturally not much dwelt upon, but we may give one example from the famous Mrs. Piper already alluded to. Dr. Leaf reported of “Phinuit,” one of her trance personalities or “controls”: “He, in fact, exhibits just the low moral tone which we so often find in table-

talking, planchette, or other manifestations, as we now regard them, of the secondary self. He swears freely and indulges in slang of the vulgar New England sort, in a way quite alien from the manners of Mrs. Piper." <sup>8</sup>

Phinuit, it may be remarked, gradually took a back seat amongst her "controls," under the refined and elevating influence of Mrs. Piper's circle.

The indecency of the *intoxicated* and the *insane* is too familiar to need illustration, and the works of psycho-analysts give abundant examples of the close connection between *neurotic symptoms* and sexual inclinations repressed at the dictates of decency and morality. Probably every one has come across cases of delirium where the patient, it may be a refined girl or woman, has amazed and distressed her friends by filthy language.

A typical example may be given of the indecency of those *possessed by demons* from the Lancashire People exorcised by the puritan Darrell (shortly before 1600). He says, "They spoke so malapertly in their fits that Mistress Starchye's owne childe called her whoore," and they spoke "blasphemously of the holy bible, calling it often tymes and that aloude *bible bable*." <sup>9</sup>

John Webster, who wrote in 1677, one of the last of the protagonists in the great *witchcraft* controversy, says of the charges against witches and their confessions --

"For the most part of them are not credible, by reason of their obscenity and filthiness; for chaste ears (*sic*) would tingle to hear such bawdy and immodest lies; and what pure and sober minds would not nauseate and startle to understand such unclean stories . . . ?" <sup>10</sup>

The modern witch historian who tells the story of the English witches, omitting the lewd part, says, "No one who has not read for himself can have any notion of the vile character of the charges and confessions embodied in witch pamphlets. It is an aspect of the question which has not been touched in these pages." <sup>11</sup>

With people who are swept off their feet in *religious revivals* the reckless and immodest borders on the

impressive. The close connection between the two is shown in the following entry in Wesley's Journal, July 1, 1789: "A young woman sank down at Rose Green in violent agony of both body and mind, as did five or six persons in the evening at the new room, at whose cries many were greatly offended. . . . The first that was deeply touched was L—— W——, whose mother had been not a little displeased a day or two before when she was told how her daughter exposed herself before all the congregation. The mother herself was the next who dropped down, and lost her senses in a moment." 12

*Primitives* who go off into trances are apt to say and to do things repugnant to their conscious ideas of modesty. The condition called *Latâh*, common amongst the Malay races, is described by Sir Hugh Clifford as a "temporary paralysis of the will-power" incident upon a sudden shock or startling noise. Its victims do whatever is suggested, generally imitating any striking movement.<sup>13</sup> But "while in this condition," he says, "they very frequently, nay, almost invariably, make use of villainously bad language without any one prompting them to do so."

A somewhat similar condition is seen amongst the aboriginal tribes of Siberia, where it is called *Amurâhk*. A typical instance may be given. Miss Czaplicka quotes Jochelson on the Yakuts, a race of Siberian Turks. "One night I slept in the house of a Yakut with a young man—a Russian—who had been sent to the Kolyma district as a criminal. The hostess . . . took a fancy to the young man; and when he left . . . the young woman had an hysterical fit, during which she sang an improvisation that plainly told her feelings." The following free translation is given—

"The friend with testicles like wings!  
The stranger-friend from the South, from Yakutsk.  
The friend with supple joints,  
With the handsome face and nice mind!  
I met a friend who is very alert!  
I will never part with him, with the friend."

"This she repeated many times for about two hours, when she fell into a deep sleep. The husband loved his wife and was jealous of her, but during the fit he abused only the *abassy* (evil spirit) who disturbed his wife with temptation." <sup>14</sup>

Finally the *mystical phenomena* of saintly biographies is said by so sympathetic a student as Dean Inge to abound in the grotesque, the puerile and indecent.<sup>15</sup>

Both convulsions and recklessly immodest behaviour are symptoms of what Prof. Janet calls a "malady of personal synthesis." <sup>16</sup> In convulsive attacks the muscles are no longer under the control of the will, but the lower nervous systems work independently of the higher. Reckless behaviour is also not under the control of the will. "In healthy minds," says Janet, "the systems pertaining to each idea are connected with an infinitely wider system of which they are only a part—the system of our entire consciousness, of our entire individuality." In cases such as those enumerated "things happen as if an idea, a partial system of thoughts, emancipated itself, became independent and developed itself on its own account. The result is, on the one hand, that it develops far too much, and on the other hand, that consciousness appears no longer to control it." <sup>17</sup>

Some such dissociation between partial systems, in the functioning of the brain, would seem to be an accompaniment of all mediumistic phenomena.<sup>18</sup>

The derangement in question would seem to have its counterpart amongst animals. The so-called *cataplexy* of the lower animals reminds us of the Melanesian *Latâh*, for it too is a state of temporary paralysis induced by any sudden and unexpected agitation. It has been observed, amongst other animals, in hens, guinea-pigs, frogs, crabs and snakes.<sup>19</sup> Again, a "false conception" or nervous pregnancy is a neurotic fantasy shared by dogs and human beings,<sup>20</sup> for it is not uncommon for a female dog to exhibit every symptom of pregnancy and of delivery except the offspring.

In this view, then, all the medium's activities, including spirit-communications, are the work of the dissociated "unconscious mind," and the nervous derangement involved should neither be overlooked nor exaggerated. Professional mediumship would seem incompatible with healthy mental growth.

The medium's mind works at unconscious levels and is therefore highly suggestible; and no doubt the suggestions of people of fine character may in a limited way be educative, but such education in our view is "off the lines," since it does not encourage individual development. Any injury to the medium's nerves brought about by psychic phenomena is not less an injury should disembodied spirits be concerned in it. On the other hand, too much may be made of these bad effects.

As Prof. James has shown, a state of disordered nerves may sometimes be a stage towards better sanity.<sup>21</sup> Nervous disorder, as such, is without beauty, but incidentally beauty may result from it.

On the whole, perhaps, the typical Englishman of to-day (unlike the mediæval saint) has too great a fear of fits, too little fear of repression, which is equally a sign of defective co-ordination. The first may be a prelude to taking of the Kingdom of Heaven by storm, the second induces many a man to leave his spiritual treasure buried in the ground.

A purely fanciful simile makes our standpoint clearer. Imagine a piece of orchestral music in which, as is sometimes the case, the predominant part belongs throughout to the strings.

The whole orchestra, led by the first violins, is like the mind of a developed personality, wherein reason and the higher impulses predominate.

Other instruments start themes and monopolise attention for a time—even the drum has its solos—but in the well-balanced mind they do so in a manner which bears reference to the remaining instruments and to the whole symphony.



An excessively rational mind is one in which too much emphasis is given to the strings, too little to the wind and percussion instruments. Sometimes the extreme rationalist gets tired or ill, or, from one cause or another, has his attention directed to his own unconscious mind. Then, for the first time, perhaps, he listens to other instruments than the strings, and is immensely struck by their significance, so much so that he is likely to invent a theory that they alone give meaning to the music. 'According to his temperament, he will now be found joining in a cult of the wood-wind, a persecution of the brass, or a society for muffling the drum.

A state of nervous instability is one in which subordinate instruments get out of hand. It may be the trumpet who inserts his "shrill notes of anger" where they are not wanted; or the "soft, complaining flute," having ended its ditty about the "hopeless lovers," continues softly to complain, not letting us forget their misery. Sometimes the first violins are worn out and cease to lead, or for a time the whole orchestra goes wrong, turning "every man to his own way."

The psycho-analytic theory would explain all so-called psychic phenomena as the result of partial dissociation between conscious and unconscious mental spheres. Impulsive tendencies either thwarted by circumstance, or repressed, or now first ready to emerge in the course of development, burst into consciousness and take possession of the individual.

Thus, to review the cases above quoted in reverse order, psycho-analysts would see in the nervous pregnancy of the female dog the instinct of maternity, thwarted by circumstance, working on some physical sensation as a basis, and forcing itself into consciousness in the form of a fantasy. The Yakut woman in the presence of a jealous husband, they would say, repressed an erotic fancy for the Russian stranger; the lady who was so disgusted with her daughter's impropriety during Wesley's preaching, was herself keeping down a certain

impulse to "wallow"; drunkards blaspheme in their cups, and the insane or delirious in their attacks of raving, in proportion to their normal habit of repressing a blasphemous tendency; while the witches' persecutors used to indulge in filthy accusations just because they were "decent folk," and filth is kept out of such people's conversation, but not without effort.

According to this theory the various utterances of the medium have a personal and subjective bearing, like the meaning of a dream, which must be pursued in the dream-mind. The "personages" of a dream represent different traits of the self, demanding expression. Nothing else is signified by Spirits of the dead who speak through the medium; by the trance personalities of secondary states, as well as by the gods, demons, angels, spirits or what not, who "possess" or "control" the medium. The mind at primitive levels is suggestible in the extreme; the medium accepts whatever explanation of his doings is suggested by his circle, and does, so far as he can, whatever is expected of him. His capacities to a certain extent depend upon the support of suggestion. The mystery that surrounds the subject will be cleared up when mediums submit their dreams to expert psycho-analysts; in those dreams will be found the clue to the origin and nature of the suspended table and all its kind, as well as to the significance of trance utterance.

The theory remains to be tested. Meanwhile in point of comprehensiveness it holds the field, supplying as it does connecting links between phenomena so difficult to group together as beatific visions and inspired utterances of saints, rhythmic ravings of savages, hallucinations of hysterics, the stock performances of the professional medium, and the dreams of ordinary people. And not only so, but the work of connecting various phenomena under this theory goes further, for all these strange, mysterious, abnormal or supernormal activities of the mind, are shown to be of one pattern

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with the everyday mentality of normal people, to be, in fact, extreme examples of what we all constantly do and experience.

Hitherto any explanation attempted has drawn a sharp distinction between the normal self and the trance self, between the recognised complete personality and the various partial or trance personalities, and between each of these and the rest. But, in fact, there is no clear-cut boundary. Conscious and unconscious, normal and supernormal, shade off into each other as gradually as some dreams stretch into waking thought. The introspective observer who purposely lingers on the border-line between conscious and unconscious, may experience every degree of dissociation between the two, from the slight degree of the child's lie, which comes so promptly that he hardly knows whether he is responsible, to the complete dissociation of the epileptic or the sleep-walker, who feels no responsibility for what he has done.

It is in border-line cases that psycho-analysts have found the clue to a solution of the problem, and of more than it was ever thought to include.

The intellectually honest, and self-controlled hysteric—and there are many—knows how gradually conscious and unconscious merge; how subtly they are intermingled; how difficult it is to say when the self has control snatched from it by ungovernable impulse, and when control is voluntarily yielded. No one knows better how intimately a fit of bad temper or “sulks” resembles the mood which sets the hand automatically scribbling, the muscles convulsively jerking; how little difference there is between the intense inner conviction with which one holds a religious dogma, and the peculiar feeling of certainty attaching to a memory of unconscious origin and symbolic significance, but completely untrue to fact; nor, again, how much alike are the people who appear in a dream, and those visionary figures which some people see in broad daylight when wide awake.

The view we have put forward may arouse suspicion because it groups together phenomena from opposite poles of spiritual and æsthetic value. But it does not thereby confuse their values.

Delirium is a diseased state, but the delirious inspirations of a born artist may have a beauty surpassing that of his normal creations — are, indeed, likely to do so should he be an habitually repressed or conventional person, as the poems of Christopher Smart, Jas. Thomson and W. Collins testify.<sup>22</sup>

Inspiration is of all degrees of value. Isaiah's oracles are not the less worthy to be matched with Handel's muse because some of his contemporary seers showed little truth or beauty in their prophesyings. The breakdown of higher control does not create the power in question, but gives it opportunity for expression.

To ask people with mediumistic gifts to submit their dreams to psycho-analysis is to ask them to perform an exacting task in the cause of truth; for they must be prepared to lay bare to the analyst, and themselves, the intimate and private concerns of the life of the emotions; must be ready, like Marcus Aurelius, to live for a time "without walls or curtains." Even Marcus might have flinched at the ordeal of facing his unconscious traits — the tendencies he repressed because they were so painful; his dog-like infatuation, perhaps, for the charming but worthless Faustina; his jealousy of the colleague to whom he was so much more generous than just; his Eskimo-like tenderness for his child, which shielded the little Commodus from that stern correction which might have made him a less hideous character.

No doubt in time the difficulties will be surmounted, and psycho-analytic theories, in so far as they are true, will displace their forerunners, till they, in turn, are displaced by a more developed expression of the truth.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER XVI

<sup>1</sup> The universal primitive worship of stones is a worship of the stone-spirit. See Frazer, *Folk Lore in the Old Testament*, II. chap. iv., § 4.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer throughout.

<sup>3</sup> Pearsall Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Bradley, *The Making of English*, 1904, p. 199.

<sup>5</sup> Frazer, *Taboo, etc.*, 3rd ed., pp. 420-1. See also F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to History of Religion*, 3rd ed., pp. 32-3.

<sup>6</sup> *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, VI. 440.

<sup>7</sup> R. H. Vincent, *The Elements of Hypnotism*, 1897, p. 85 footnote.

<sup>8</sup> *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, VI. 560.

<sup>9</sup> Darrell's *Detection, etc.*, 1600, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*, 1677, pp. 68 and 247-8. Sexual intercourse with the Devil was a common confession.

<sup>11</sup> Wm. Notestein, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Davenport, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>13</sup> Sir Hugh Clifford, *Studies in Brown Humanity*, pp. 189 and 200.

<sup>14</sup> M. A. Czaplicka, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

<sup>15</sup> *Life of Blessed Henry Suso*, 1913, Introduction, p. xiii.

<sup>16</sup> *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria*, 1907, p. 332.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>18</sup> For a clear diagram see A. T. Schofield, *The Unconscious Mind*, 4th ed., 1906, frontispiece. Also F. M. Davenport, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>19</sup> Prof. Angelo Mosso, *Fear*, trans. 1896, p. 242.

<sup>20</sup> Prof. Janet said, in 1907, that he had noted down about ten cases. See his *Major Symptoms of Hysteria*, p. 263.

<sup>21</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1902, p. 257. See also Dr. Newton Marshall's *Conversion*, 1909.

<sup>22</sup> They wrote their most beautiful poems when insane.

## CHAPTER XVII

### LOGIC, LOVE AND RELIGION

For a' that and a' that,  
It's coming yet, for a' that,  
That man to man the world o'er  
Shall brothers be for a' that."—R. BURNS.

IN this chapter we shall enquire, what are the logical implications of love, in what directions is it developing, and what would seem likely to be the religion of the future?

Contrasting love in its most advanced forms with its most primitive, we find that the difference between them is not one of strength of impulse. Amongst animals one baboon will lay down his life for another, and thereby show an impulsive love as great as that of a human being.<sup>1</sup> But in Man this impulse is re-inforced not only by cognate impulses, but also by deliberate purpose; while the range of objects arousing it becomes increasingly wider.

It is in this last respect that love has developed most conspicuously. The relation binding human beings in "fellowship" or "fraternity" is but recently discerned, and it constitutes a part of the modern conception of love.

Plato's love of moral goodness (which he called justice) and St. Paul's (who called it love) are unsurpassed for purity and passion. But there were actual relations of justice and of love amongst people of their

time that neither Plato nor St. Paul could see. In the picture presented to Plato by the world of his day, Greeks and barbarians were related to each other in a scheme of universal brotherhood, involving the right of each to self-development, to the height of his capacity. But this scheme of inter-relation had not yet been discerned. It was discovered later, and no one looking at the world's picture thenceforth could ignore it.

It could not occur to Plato that justice demanded equal opportunities for developing individuality as between masters and slaves; nor could it occur to St. Paul that love demanded the same equality here on earth as between men and women. It was no more possible for these two men to transcend the accepted notions of their day completely and in detail, than it was possible for them to notice the law of gravitation, or the properties of electricity, which were actually in force around them. Each had a vision of the widest of all schemes, the universe of things, and its counterpart the universe of thought; but neither saw all the lesser schemes included in the greater, gradually unfolding within the order of the whole. In every epoch, more of these schemes become visible, but some still remain invisible from the only point of view as yet occupied by Man.

The scheme of universal human fellowship, implied in love from the outset, is more clearly seen to-day than in Plato's time, not only because of Man's increased capacity for detecting such schemes, but because fellowship is one of those relations which is actually becoming more defined and hence more noticeable.

Early Man desired his own and his family's health, wealth and happiness. To-day he desires these no less than did the primitive, but beyond and above these, he desires the intellectual enlightenment, the moral and physical well-being of the human race. He longs for the whole world to become better and happier, freer, and more loving, in short, more like itself, for such

an extension of the bounds of love is a logical implication of the very nature of love, and hence of life.

To live at all implies love. A man must be moved by kindly impulse towards himself to cherish and preserve his own life. But were he to confine love to his own person, though the individual might go on living for a time, the race could not, for male and female, parent and offspring would destroy each other whenever interests clashed. In pre-loving animals a lack of parental love has to be compensated by extreme prolificness; a million oysters begin life that one may grow up.<sup>2</sup>

Survival would be precarious were love confined to the family group, and it is not safe till amity prevail over a large enough field to ensure that many young are cherished into maturity. In the animal world mutual aid replaces mutual struggle, along the line of instinct,<sup>3</sup> while with Man it becomes purposive, and the emotion accompanying it, self-conscious.

Friendly feeling, recognised as such, starts within a family-group (whether or not based on kinship and descent), and gradually extends its sphere to larger groups—the clan, the city, State, race, empire—till the world is divided amongst a few large groups. Then comes the question whether the earth shall belong to all or to one, a question which each powerful nation in turn, from Assyria downwards, has tried to settle in its own favour.

The latest attempt at world-conquest, like every earlier attempt, has failed, and once again the human race stands facing a dilemma of civilisation, a dilemma never before so clearly understood. For Man has become conscious of the fact that love—that complex chord, physical emotional and intellectual—is the basic principle of life, and that one of its logical corollaries, or implications, is universal brotherhood.

But some are for going back against the current of human progress, or at least for staying where they are,



and refusing any further to develop inter-racial amity. Such people would say: Up to this point love has increased its bounds at the expense of hatred, but here let it stop. At this point we replace mercy and forgiveness by justice and righteous indignation. °

Others are for going on. They would say: We cannot put a limit to the advance of love if we would, and we would not if we could. Universal human brotherhood is the highest social ideal yet conceived by Man, the goal towards which he is seen to be inevitably making, unconsciously at first, and later self-consciously. Man's unconscious destiny has become his conscious purpose.<sup>4</sup>

For what is meant by "love"? We observe it first in the lower animals, where it is the "feeling" side of certain unconscious, instinctive or quasi-mechanical reactions. In primitive Man we find it, accompanying a corresponding set of impulses, and becoming conscious. In later generations this same feeling-accompaniment to impulse is re-inforced by deliberate purpose and ethical desire. Finally, valuation presents a passionate admiration of love itself as a principle of conduct; till in the Christian conception (the highest yet known) two distinct impulses are blended, the impulse to love, and the impulse to worship love as a divine principle determining human conduct. Such worship, on its "conative" or "doing" side, is an attitude of the will, an endeavour to make action independent of varying moods. "To love," said St. Thomas Aquinas, "is nothing else than to will good to something."<sup>5</sup>

One mode of tracing the evolution of love would be to follow the history of the words that have stood for it. We do not propose to make the attempt, but we may here point out some of the widely various meanings given to the word in current use. "Love" means in different contexts—

- (1)<sup>6</sup> The feeling in animals which accompanies their instinctive behaviour to each other when

- related (i) as sexual mate to mate; (ii) as parent to offspring and vice versa, and (iii) as fellow-members of a group. (Instinctive love.)
- (2) The same feeling in human beings, with whom it is more or less self-conscious, and accompanies an instinct of wider scope. (Impulsive love—sexual, maternal, fraternal, etc.)
- (3) A feeling of the supreme intrinsic value of passionate love between the sexes. (The idealistic sexual love of Romance and Chivalry.).
- (4) A feeling of the supreme intrinsic value of love of every kind and degree, as constituting the chief purpose of life, individual and social; and its consequent adoption as a principle of conduct. (Intellectual and religious love.)

The highest love yet widely recognised, such as that of St. Francis, has included all these meanings. It has been at the same time instinctive, impulsive, romantic, religious and intellectual.

A valuation of love as the motive of supreme value, with a corresponding direction of conduct, constitutes *morality*; while the same valuation and choice, when accompanied by worship of love itself, constitutes *religion*.<sup>6</sup> Such worship is distinct from the primitive's awe of a supernatural object, though at every stage of mental evolution advanced and primitive elements are mixed.

Love, then, is continually becoming both more explicit, and more far-reaching; and Man has been guided by it throughout his evolution. It explains as does nothing else his wide divergence from the brutes, while it points the path of progress to the gods, the constant goal of human aspiration.

Tracing the line of development into the future we surmise that love, in the race, will reach a further stage when people will love each other not more than they do now, nor perhaps more than they have ever

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done, but with a love more widely extended and more effective, less hampered by hatred; that they will honour love more and make it more consciously their guiding principle of conduct.

It will follow that the particular desires of individuals, groups, classes, races, nations, and of all mankind, will then be fulfilled, so far as it is possible to fulfil desires which call for mutual adjustment. Love leads men to "give to them that ask," and to give them what they ask, not something less desired. Insane or criminal races, should such exist, will be treated as the criminal or lunatic is treated who belongs to an affectionate and enlightened family.

It has always been the peculiar delight of the logically minded to picture himself as one of a great host, a brotherhood of all ages and races, participators in one vast universal scheme, citizens of one great city. "If our intellectual part is common . . . we are fellow-citizens: if this is so . . . the world is in a manner a state." <sup>7</sup> "The poet saith, 'Dear city of Cecrops,' and shall not I say 'Dear city of Zeus!' " <sup>8</sup>

From the point of view here taken the history of mankind is a history of the growth of love, and the logic of life is one with the logic of religion, since religion, whatever else it may be, is an expression of the universal desire for moral goodness, of the felt supremacy of those higher motives which are epitomised in "love."

There has never been any difference of opinion as to what these motives were. "The Virtues" as against "the Vices" are, broadly speaking, the same at all times and places.<sup>9</sup> The consistent Jew, Christian, Buddhist, Mohammedan, Confucian or what-not, is the man who invariably orders his doings in accordance with the virtues; his religion expresses his feeling of their superior or compelling force.

With Eastern and Western peoples alike, this supremacy of goodness is vividly felt, but the Western feels along with it his capacity for choice, so that Western

religions express, besides, an act of choice in a sphere of irreconcilable alternatives—the “Great Divide.” The Eastern’s goal of Nirvana, or “extinction,” is annihilation of animal impulses which hinder divine progress; the Western’s goal of conquering the Devil is no less, but, in addition, it declares his feeling of choice in the matter, his exertion of will.

Religion does not make Man good; the good in Man makes religion. As Man develops, religion, like knowledge, develops; but no more than knowledge, can religion ever contradict itself.

Religion could only cease if Man were to cease to desire to be good. Obviously if he were to cease to desire to be good no religion could ever make him good.<sup>10</sup> While he longs after goodness he will express that longing, and such expression constitutes religion. There is no sign that the longing is less than it ever was, though, as always throughout the history of religion, the collective forms of its expression are perpetually becoming obsolete.

There are signs perhaps that in the religion of the future, truth and beauty will take their place alongside of moral goodness, and claim allegiance each on its own merits, independently of the others.<sup>11</sup> Each offers an alternative between absolutes, between beauty and ugliness, truth and falsity, and the religion of the future may require an act of choice as definite in the one case as the other, may deem it a religious duty to promote the beautiful and prevent the ugly, no less than to promote virtue and prevent wickedness. Then those who are æsthetically primitive will continue to consult “authority” as to what should be encouraged or opposed, while bolder spirits will consult their love of beauty.

Human happiness will be increased by some such widening of the notion of religion, for morality is not the only thing that makes men happy. It is, indeed, an essential to happiness in the normal man, whose nature

demands the absolute moral choice, the recognition of the claims of goodness, whereby the whole life is lived on one side and not the other of the "Great Divide." In some form or other such choice is unescapable, but its implications are sometimes unconscious; not clearly seen nor deliberately willed. Then, the individual is unsatisfied, keeping undeveloped that universal primitive desire to be good, to which we owe all religion and every moral code.

But desire for goodness demands satisfaction along channels which shall also satisfy the intellect, and at least do no violence to love of beauty. Not only so, but the appetites must receive their due, and a compromise be arranged amongst the various contrary impulses native and ineradicable in the individual mind. The predominant interest or "ruling passion" of a happy life may be of one kind or another—the Troubadour's love of women, the Saint's love of God, the Scholar's love of Greek, or the carter's love of horses—all else may have a subordinate interest derivative from these. But happiness, we repeat, demands that in every case the absolute value of goodness be recognised in the whole trend of the life; while the religion of the future may leave a man uneasy who does not fall on his knees to truth and beauty as well as love, and that whether his disposition to worship originate in the conscious or unconscious mind.

It is thought by some that religion is on the wane, because they gauge it by the profession of a belief in God. In the next chapter some attempt will be made to surmise the future of belief in God, but before closing this, we will examine the view, as we understand it, of the religious-minded man or woman of to-day who is without such a definite belief.

Such an one sees the evolution of the race, to be, as a matter of fact, in a certain direction, the direction of developing love. To use a world-old simile: the universe of fact is to him like an orchestral symphony,

heard by the untrained ear. Here and there the listener catches a melody or recognises a repeated theme. The trained ear of the musician would grasp the whole, would know how parts fit into each other, and what each instrument contributes to the total effect. Since Darwin's time, the idea of evolution has brought a clearer understanding. The symphony is now understood to be unfolding—becoming, not merely being. As it is played, it grows more complete and beautiful, less incoherent and self-contradictory. Mankind is seen to be moving forward, from the animal to the divine, from the realm of capricious impulse and blind instinct to that of reasoned, purposive action, where the higher, more far-reaching impulses steadfastly control the lower; from self-centred and materialistic motive to altruistic and ideal; from the useful to the good.

There are some people, religious in a widely-accepted meaning of the word, who rejoice in the actual world, but to whom the idea of God seems remote and superfluous, a question of theoretical and abstract interest, on a par with metaphysical problems.

"I say to thee, do thou repeat  
To the first man thou mayest meet  
In lane, highway, or open street

That he and we and all men move  
Under a canopy of love  
As broad as the blue sky above." 12

They feel this so strongly that they have no time nor interest for speculations concerning "the Godhead."

So with our listener. He knows that the symphony is good, worth listening to, but he is disinclined to speculate about its authorship, for that is a question which has been much debated and never settled. He leaves them to break each other's heads over the matter whom it interests. He is one of the religious-minded sceptics, who have been many in all ages.

The fact that mankind is perpetually creating and

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following some definite religion or other he explains thus—

In the earlier stages of existence it is as though Man needed an assurance that it is, indeed, a symphony in which he finds himself involved. In order to have the courage to live and strive, he must be able to feel that life is good and beautiful and has a purpose. At this stage Authority and Miracle and the notion of God help to reassure him. It is not what is false in these notions that is helpful, but what is true—the truths embodied in forms in which he can receive them. Later on, the scheme of the Symphony, though imperfectly mastered, becomes clear in its main outlines. The beauty of the plan reveals itself; the music supplies the clue to its own meaning. Religion is merged in life, and no special religious terms and symbols are any longer naturally employed.

It may be that in some ways these sceptics in every age are ahead of their times, for their religion is that fundamental religion of mysticism underlying all religions. It may be that the religion of the future will be one with life, and that it will not include the notion of a God. But any religion of the future, at which we can guess, is not likely to be the last. It is, indeed, more likely to be but an early link in a chain which the time-process is evolving. In every sphere of thought, older forms re-emerge on higher planes of development, and the idea of God is likely to return in a series of more developed forms.

In the body politic of mankind we see a universal rude democracy give place to despotism, and despotism, in its turn, slowly evolving towards a higher democracy; and what comes next we know not. Thus, at one point in a nation's growth its worst danger is lest it should slip back into a democracy which it has outgrown; at another lest it should betray the democratic ideals for which it is matured. So with religion it is perpetually evolving, and he who would surmise its future

must look at its past. Especially must he look at that nucleus of religion, those aims which every religion has set out to promote, however ineffectually, and which to-day are neither abandoned nor attained. These, we may be sure, will continue to find expression in the religions of the future, and with increasing clearness.

To gauge the beliefs of to-morrow we must, then, observe the changes which are taking place to-day. Perhaps the change most distinctive of our time may be described by varying a former simile. Human society is the orchestra which plays the symphony, an orchestra of a unique character, in which every player finds his part in creating it. This he does by spontaneously following his impulse to make music, appreciating the while the fact that his efforts fit in with those of the rest. There is a scheme, a symphony, to which he contributes, and at a certain stage of evolution it is best advanced by each player abandoning the performance of his own little tune to himself, and trying to find out from Authority what notes he should be playing. One such stage is about to end, and we are entering on the next; where Man's desire to aid the whole urges him to return to his individual tune. He now knows that in so far as he truly and courageously plays this, he cannot be out of harmony with the whole, must, indeed, promote its design.

To put it another way: every human being—even the abnormal—is born into the world with a message, to be delivered both in time and eternity by him alone, since, like himself, it is unique. Each “finds himself” and helps his fellows by delivering it.

A kindred message may constitute the chief social bond of the future, over-riding barriers of class and race. Through it each man will find his group of fellow-men. How does the world strike him? What does he desire as good, believe as true, and take pleasure in as beautiful? The day of authority in these matters is



passing, having fulfilled its purpose. For a time, reliance on authority helped mankind in the upward struggle. It was easier to obey common opinion and the vision of the seer, than to trust to better impulses which were fitful and insecure. It was easier, "to walk in the good old paths" than to strike out each a path for himself. But the same innate desire for excellence which led man to obey authority, has become self-conscious, and is seen to be divine, so that he dare trust it: Deference to group opinion is outworn—is found at our present stage a hindrance, not an aid, to progress; the seer still leads, but as a fellow-seeker; the battle is now fought against the evil, the false and the ugly, by each man armed with the weapons of his own soul, his longing for goodness, truth and beauty. We live at the dawn of freedom and democracy, and to each is given the choice, of welcoming the sunrise, or of closing shutters in a vain endeavour to prolong the twilight, as the last shadow of authority withdraws from the mountains.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER XVII

- <sup>1</sup> Brehm, *From North Pole to Equator*, trans. 1897, p. 300.
- <sup>2</sup> Prof. J. A. Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90.
- <sup>4</sup> Cf. Prof. L. T. Hobhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, 1901, p. 396.
- <sup>5</sup> Quoted by H. O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind*, 1911, II. 472.
- <sup>6</sup> This aspect of the subject is expressed by Matthew Arnold's dictum, "Religion is Morality tinged with emotion."
- <sup>7</sup> M. Antoninus, Long's trans., IV. 4.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. 23.
- <sup>9</sup> See Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 1908, II. 742.
- <sup>10</sup> Cf. F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to History of Comparative Religion*, 3rd ed., 1904, *Lecture on Morality*.
- <sup>11</sup> See A. Clutton Brock, *The Ultimate Belief*
- <sup>12</sup> Archbishop Trench.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE LOGIC OF GOD AND DEVIL

Thy work with beauty crown, thy life with love;  
Thy mind with truth uplift to God above :  
From whom all is, from whom was all begun, ●  
In whom all Beauty, Truth, and Love are one.—R. BRIDGES.

IN the last chapter it was hazarded that an increasing number of people, and amongst them some of the best, nowadays do without God. But many still hold to a god, and the God whom they worship is diverse.

We have noticed two views prevailing to-day with regard to inter-human relations. We saw that some are for pressing love to a logical conclusion and promoting inter-racial friendliness; others are for limiting its bounds and substituting a cautious hostility. These views are symbolised by corresponding gods. The National Jehovah of well-known sections of the Old Testament represents the hostile attitude, surviving from a time when inter-racial hatred was the best yet known; when it was consciously and frankly adopted as a duty, by the priest and the many, while inter-racial love was the inspired vision of the prophet and the few. It must be admitted that Hatred and Revenge are also symbolised by a Christ who identified his personal enemies with the enemies of righteousness—that Christ in whose name the stake and the dungeon have claimed their long train of victims.

On the other hand, many of the people, who see the

hope of the world in inter-racial fellowship, have Jesus of Nazareth for their god. They find in him the perfect embodiment of human love; who practised what he preached, for not only did he exhort men to love their enemies, but when he was being cruelly and painfully done to death by his own, he prayed that they might be, not justly punished, but forgiven.

For those people to whom Jesus is "Christ" a religious symbol would seem to be natural and necessary. They need a being whom they can regard as the embodiment and source of their own highest aspirations and ideals. For them religious symbols are not outworn. Some look, indeed, for a new symbol, one less equivocal than the Christ of intolerant and exclusive sects, but they cannot do without some symbol or other.

We venture to think that theirs is the common case: that the vast majority of people to-day are not like the religious-minded sceptic described in the last chapter, but worship God, half-consciously, perhaps, in various symbolic forms, amongst which are two at least of the three persons of the Trinity.

We may here enquire how it is that a god came to be introduced into human life at all.

From an early stage we see two innate tendencies at work, which, more than any others, produce the conception of God: man's proneness to worship whatever impresses him, and to be impressed by outstanding men and women. Goodness and power are striking qualities, and good or powerful people, of strong personality, who inspire confidence by believing in themselves, have always been worshipped as gods or heroes. This primitive tendency to worship is enhanced and influenced by the fallacies of will, of authority, of the marvellous, and of suggestibility.

In India, says Prof. Monier Williams, "to this day, all living persons remarkable for great personal valour and strength, or for supposed miraculous powers, run the risk—like Paul and Barnabas at Lystra—of being

converted into gods. Even any unusual deformity or strange eccentricity may be an evidence of divinity.”<sup>1</sup>

• The cult of a new hero-god is started by a few, whose hearts are touched or minds over-awed; others follow the fashion, and many render a homage which is largely from the lips.

Admiration of goodness and of power are pressing human emotions, and man has always thought of his chief god as the most admirable being of whom he could conceive. But the idea of what is admirable develops, and that of God develops correspondingly; new gods arise and the old change their attributes. The tribal god of the Old Testament is early in time, and he is worshipped to-day in civilised countries by individuals who are primitive in character.

The more advanced races seem to have lost the capacity for making new gods—to have outgrown the outlook on life necessary to their making—the power to see great men uncritically, with the eyes of the primitive. So it comes about that while General Nicholson is worshipped by certain Indians, Mr. Gladstone is not worshipped amongst ourselves. We can keep the gods we have inherited, for we have not lost our symbolising tendency, and we can make new heroes of prize-fighters and cinema-actors, but we cannot make a new god even at the bidding of Mrs. Besant.

We continue, however, to develop our ideal of the god-like man. For throughout the history of any religion though the same god-man be worshipped, the character attributed to him differs widely at different epochs. That of any given period will be found to reflect the notions of power and goodness prevailing at the time. Thus to each individual Christian the idea of Christ embodies the best he knows, and each Christ may be unlike the others, and not one of them perhaps much like Jesus of Nazareth, who in some respects is still far above our heads, in some, it may be, behind us.

But though the idea of God continue, we have noticed

that there are people who no longer use a symbol of God, because they have substituted the goodness they actually experience as the object of their veneration. They distinguish between the universal attribute and the concrete particular instance of it, without the need of separating them.

People of this type see every mother's love as holy, without reference to a divine Mother and Child. They are moved to worship at each revolt against a soul-destroying formalism; by every rebel who refuses either to be cowed by force or to employ it; nor do they need the memory of One Crucified to remind them of what is god-like in Man. If the name of God have any meaning for them it is not as a person, but as the source and sum of all things good.

But if the notion of God be dispensed with by some who worship goodness, an even larger number of people who hate evil would seem to do without the Devil. We shall here enquire into the logical implications of the notion of the Devil, and show how in our view these opposite concepts of God and Devil hang together, and that mankind has not yet outgrown the need for either—is, perhaps, at a very early stage of their evolution.

God and Devil have one origin, the tendency of the primitive, already noticed, to worship whatever impresses him and to be impressed by power. Just as the god of the day is, amongst other things, the symbol and epitome of all that Man most admires, so is the devil of the day the symbol of all that he most fears and detests.

At earlier stages of culture the two are not distinguished. What Man admires is power. What he detests is that same power directed against himself. All power is conceived on the model of human impulse or will (as yet undiscriminated), nor is any difference felt between natural and supernatural, between moral and immoral, as such. The prime antithesis is between strong and weak, food-producing and food-destroying,

because these are the characteristics that absorb Man's interest and arrest his attention. Whatever brings him food, and increases his prosperity, and the group's, is *good*, whatever brings famine, and weakens or impoverishes himself and the group, is *evil*.<sup>2</sup>

Conduct of every kind is originally judged by this standard. The particular acts, for example, which we call "murder," "rape" and "incest," are judged as good or evil, according to their effect on the material prosperity of the group, and the same action is regarded as meritorious by some people and as a heinous offence by others equally civilised.<sup>3</sup>

The gods at this stage are powerful and capricious, they assume different aspects or moods. The same god in one of his moods will be terrible and revengeful or wantonly destructive, in another mood he will be beneficent and forgiving.

In the course of racial development reason and self-control come to permeate impulse and instinct, and Man feels that he has a choice in his actions. Then different types of god become marked off from each other, the good gods from the evil. Man distinguishes between God and Devil as soon as he recognises a fundamental antagonism between the principles of moral good and evil, between love and hatred as such.

The Egyptian god Set furnishes an interesting example of the evolution of god and devil.<sup>4</sup> He is the god of the sky by night, and his brother Horus is the god of the sky by day. When first Set is introduced in the Pyramid Texts, we read, he is a friend and helper of the dead. Together with Horus he holds the ladder whereby the soul of the dead man mounts to Heaven. Set and Horus each bestows "life, strength and health" upon the king who is crowned at Thebes. Even as late as the XVIIIth Dynasty we find it recorded in the "Book of the Dead" that "Horus purifieth and Set strengtheneth, and Set purifieth and Horus strengtheneth,"

But in another aspect Set from the first was antagonistic to Horus, as is darkness to light, and this is the rôle in which he gradually develops till finally "the god of light (Horus) gains a glorious victory over the prince of darkness (Set) and his fiends." They fight each other perpetually, first weaponless, to match their worshippers,\* then armed with weapons of iron. The priests of Ra (the god who superseded Horus) hastened the metamorphosis of Set from god to devil, by depicting him as "the serpent of millions of years" devouring those enemies of Ra who had escaped the avenging flames of "the Tuat"—the Egyptian hell. In a later legend Set is a kind of St. George's dragon, whom Ra subdues with his spear, and leads away in chains. Thus we see Horus and Set start together as god-devils, while the one ends as god the other as devil.

The character of the Devil changes in the course of history no less than does that of God, for just as a man's god reflects the best he knows, so his devil reflects the worst; and notions of evil develop *pari passu* with notions of good. By the time that Man has come to conceive of God as predominantly love, the Devil is predominantly hatred, or else lust, that element in the complex passion of love, which in collusion with hatred, sometimes makes love self-destructive. To-day if man think of the Devil at all, he probably thinks of him as the prompter of "War upon earth, and bad will towards men."

Primitive Man sees the Devil in whatever harms or frightens himself and his group. He sees him in slugs which destroy his cabbages, in toads and bats which make his flesh creep, in snakes which remind him of death. When God is a tribal or national god his worshippers regard the gods of surrounding nations as devils. By New Testament times the Jewish Devil was universal; he went about seeking whom he might devour with racial impartiality.

Later on, when the moral aspect of life became more

defined, the Devil personified the current temptation of the day, whatever it might be, the temptation which men found it hardest to cope with. Where the popular ideal of spiritual life is the ascetic, the Devil is *par excellence* lustful and gluttonous.<sup>5</sup> Where humility, such as that of St. Francis, inspires admiration, the Devil appears as ambition and pride—"the knowledge that puffeth up";<sup>6</sup> where men desire to be active and strenuous, the Devil figures as sloth. When simplicity is worshipped, and ignorance mistaken for it—the childish for the childlike—the Devil appears as possessed of all knowledge; he is the Magician, or Mephistopheles, who tempted Dr. Faustus. In an age in which men are becoming compassionate he is predominantly cruel.

As the moral ideal alters, God and Devil sometimes exchange attributes, but this interchange of parts does not affect the essential and fundamental difference of their characters, the absolute or irreconcilable hostility between good and evil.

Some men are by nature timid, parasitic, lazy and self-indulgent, then sloth is their Devil; others who are over-strenuous and desirous of power have pride and ambition for theirs, whether they know it or not. There is here no contradiction, only variety of vice. Civilised men, however, keep primitive traits, and sometimes relapse into archaic modes of thought and feeling, in which the Devil is revived in his earlier rôles, even to the earliest of all, in which he assumes the shape of those people, whoever they may be, who threaten the security of property.<sup>7</sup>

Why is it, it may here be asked, that the Devil has dropped out of our life in modern times? No doubt his disappearance is partly due to mental advance bringing with it an increased power of abstraction, and a reaction against the symbol, because it has been confused with the thing symbolised.

Partly, perhaps, the Devil has been prematurely hurried out of fashion by the churches, whose preachers



call upon the plain man to worship a God, so devilish in character, that he turns with relief to less inhuman fantasies like that of a Sorrowing Satan. In the churches he hears evil called good, so he counterbalances this hard doctrine at the cinemas by calling good evil. He is muddled as to which is God and which the Devil, and both lose interest for him. He likes to accept authority, but in this matter authorities differ. Should he stop to think, he knows well enough which it is that wins his sympathy and which his disapproval; but the result of thinking frightens him, so that he leaves it to his betters, appealing to his lack of education to exonerate him from the effort. His betters, in turn, exonerate themselves from the irksome duty of thinking clearly, by reliance upon authority, especially in matters of religion and morality, to which pertain notions concerning God and the Devil.

There is, besides, a "philosophical monism" of which the plain man hears rumours, as something which has made the Devil old-fashioned, so that only people who are behind the times believe in him any longer. We venture to think, however, that it is not because of any philosophical theory that the Devil has been dropped as a working hypothesis. Theories of "monism" or "dualism" do not touch the question, which belongs to one sphere of thought, while they belong to another. God and the Devil are symbolical modes of expressing the felt distinction between good and evil. The question whether this distinction is ultimately resolvable in a higher synthesis in no way affects the reality of their felt antipathy. It is like the question "of what is matter ultimately composed?" A table is felt by me as a solid object, and it does not become a whit less solid when I learn that it is ultimately composed of decomposable groups of forces, pulling in different directions, and not, as I used to be told, of indestructible small round particles.<sup>8</sup> "Solid" still has the same meaning that it always had for everyday purposes. So

with the theory of philosophical monism. I hear, and reason may convince me, that ultimately God must be found to permit the Devil. That does not alter the fact for me that the promptings of the Devil have to be resisted daily with the help of God.

The Devil is nowadays left out of the reckoning, but not because the need is no longer felt for sustained effort against evil; nor yet because the bulk of mankind has outgrown the use of symbols. On the contrary, we are ready enough to personify each other's sins, to invest Revolutionaries or Capitalists, if not Pharisees, with a diabolical halo. It is for a man's own temptations only that he has ceased to find symbols, and that from causes which are, perhaps, incidental to an age of transition. We will try to formulate them.

(1) We do not believe any longer in the existence of that black man with horns and hoofs, who used to be encountered in days before subjective and objective reality were distinguished. The subjective truth embodied in the cloven-footed one awaits a new expression.

This devil, moreover, was hated on the strength of his odious personality, but we have changed our attitude towards odious personalities; have ceased to hate the evil doer and have begun to hate the evil of his deeds. The Devil dates from a time when symbols were not distinguished from the qualities symbolised, and he is dropped because the distinction is now made; he is dropped, that is, for the same reason that we have dropped the materialised "Universal"—the tree which was the essence of freedom and yet *a tree*.<sup>9</sup>

It may be prophesied that the symbol will return and with added significance from this increased discrimination; for it does not follow that when good and evil are distinguished from good and evil beings that they become less real because less concrete. We shall revert to this point later.

(2) Another reason for relinquishing the Devil is that we do not clearly see the devilish tendencies in

present-day collective conduct. It was possible for St. Antony to engage in a straightforward fight with his temptations of the flesh, so plainly did he recognise them in their monstrous shapes; but the old "besetting sins," Love of Money, Envy, Hatred and Malice, to-day pass muster as virtues, and guide social conduct under the semblance of thrift and emulation, self-respect and patriotism. The modern man "obeys a law of Nature," not the Devil, when he injures his neighbour, and "fulfils God's purposes" by cruelty and revenge.

(3) This blindness to the devilish character of "the vices" in their latest guise, is helped by another cause, a tendency to lose sight of the absolute antagonism between good and evil. Man has only lately learnt the relativity of much that he once thought absolute, and he was bound for a time to under-emphasise the absolute character of fundamental distinctions. Eventually the irreconcilable opposition of good and evil is enhanced rather than diminished, as the foreground of life becomes clearer in outline, the background wider in scope.

(4) Lastly, it may be surmised that the Devil is on leave of absence—a leave prolonged by the confusion of ideas regarding love and hate; and before bringing this chapter to a close we will take a brief survey of hatred, the Devil's primary attribute.

Amongst the leading instincts and emotions, which prompt a man to select data of reasoning, are the dispositions to love and to hate. Love, which is physical, emotional and intellectual, is directed instinctively to the sexual partner, the offspring and the group. Hatred may be described as the desire to thwart, injure or destroy the hated object.

Each leads to the choice of different matter equally appropriate for reason to work upon. But as we noticed above, a world of men whose rational conduct was based exclusively upon hatred would set about its own destruction, while if love be taken as a guiding motive it leads to the maximum of life and well-being.

Yet the two are inseparable. We actually find hatred existing everywhere as the corollary of love. If a man love himself, he must at least be capable of a momentary hatred of whatever is hostile to himself; if he love his mate and offspring, he must be capable of animosity towards other families, whose interests are inimical; if he love his city and nation, he must be able to hate other cities and nations when they attack his own. Without a measure of hatred he could not fight. Love of any object implies at least a capacity for feelings of hatred towards any one who intentionally injures it, and a capacity for revenge.

Good lovers upon impulse are necessarily good haters upon impulse. Good lovers upon reflection only, that is, lovers of love, rather than passionate lovers of individual men, are often indifferent haters upon impulse, and have difficulty in recognising their own capacity for hatred, because of its abstract character.

Just as love involves hatred, so no instance of hatred will be found which does not involve a corresponding capacity for love. Hatred of others implies at least a love of self, and a feeling that somehow or other the self is injured by those we hate. The two most conspicuous forms of hatred are envy and jealousy. Envy, which is always envy of "the strength of others," whether neighbours, rivals or competing nations, implies a passionate love of one's self, or of one's country or group. Jealousy implies, in addition, passionate love of one other. In the best known form of jealousy, the loved person is also hated because he is felt to injure the still more loved and honoured self. Love and hatred succeed each other, sometimes with bewildering rapidity. They are like the little man and woman who come out of their house to tell the weather. But cannot both be out at once.

Amongst high-minded and developed people the logical fallacy is prevalent that because they wish not to harbour hatred in their hearts, therefore it is not

there. Were this so, love could not be there either. They are logical opposites; each has its place within a scheme or plan which necessarily includes the other.

Yet with regard to one and the same object at the same time they are incompatible, and offer at every moment a mutually exclusive choice. For it is of the nature of hatred to destroy, and it is of the nature of love to preserve, but it is also of the nature of love to be all-inclusive, so here we reach a logical deadlock. Impulsive hatred prompts a man to destroy; impulsive love prompts him to preserve and cherish one and the same object at the same time.

A way out of the impasse is found with later development of mind by means of increased abstraction and valuation. It becomes possible to divert hatred from the individual to his detestable qualities, which are abstract and universal, to be found in this case and in that; possible to a great extent to hate the evil but tolerate the evil-doer, to dislike the man's opinions, but like the man.

This power of hating abstract evil accompanies a discrimination which, as we have noticed, is recent in the history of thought—an ability\* to distinguish between the intrinsic nature of an object and its effect upon ourselves. It was not till the eighteenth century, we learn, that the distinction became embodied in language by such words as interesting, boring, perplexing, which describe feelings produced and not the objective qualities producing them.<sup>10</sup> It is one sign of the wider change of standpoint in thought, the increased power of seeing other people and things from their own point of view.

When hateful qualities are seen, from the point of view of the individual exhibiting them, the moral task changes from one of combat to one of control. We have noticed the same change, both of mental attitude and of moral task, in regard to the qualities of childishness and bestiality.<sup>11</sup> A distinction comes to be

made between the qualities of a child as such, and the childishness of a grown-up person; between the nature of the brute creation and human brutality. Just so does a distinction come to be made between the state of mind of the man who commits a hateful deed, and the state of mind necessary to produce the same behaviour in the critic of that deed.

We cannot see the Devil from his own point of view, since he has none, being an abstraction. But we can hate abstract evil in each particular concrete setting, as heartily as our forefathers hated its fantastic universal embodiment.

The energy belonging to animal and diabolical forces in man can now be directed into channels which promote his highest purposes. He passes—as Blake would have him pass—from a period of moral repression to one of creation. His word-creating faculty, for instance, so largely spent hitherto on vituperation of political enemies, can now be used to coin terms of abuse for their policies.<sup>12</sup>

With the constructive stage of morality every vice comes to be regarded as a sign of the defect of some virtue which needs to be made good. Thus whenever the sensual side of love preponderates, the spiritual and ideal need emancipation; where “envy, hatred and malice” are rampant, we may be sure that self-enjoyment, as well as sympathy and justice, is repressed. Sloth is now met by the nursing of desire, the cherishing of those sparks of energy which are always to be found in some direction or other, by one who is not too timid or too proud to see them.

At the present stage of evolution it would seem that man has need of symbols against which to vent his hatred, since he is perpetually creating or selecting them unconsciously. Were his choice deliberate hatred might be better turned into channels, where it flowed harmoniously with love, and man would be less prone to “diabolise” his neighbour.

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Perhaps the poet gives us a hint of the form in which the men of to-morrow will "renounce the devil and all his works."

"I do not think that skies and meadows are  
Moral, or that the fixture of a star  
Comes of a quiet spirit, or that trees  
Have wisdom in their windless silences,  
Yet these are things invested in my mood  
With constancy, and peace, and fortitude,  
That in my troubled season I can cry  
Upon the wide composurè of the sky,  
And envy fields, and wish that I might be  
As little daunted as a star or tree." <sup>13</sup>

The day may come when the average Londoner sees the Devil as plainly as did ever Antony or Jerome; sees him in the grey monotony of despairing streets, the monstrous grime-caten blocks, the dark and filthy basements, of the poor; the loud effrontery of luxurious shops, the forbidding grandeur of empty palaces, the smug complacency of Christian Churches.

However that may be, to judge from the wide discrepancy between social ideals and social conduct, it seems likely that mankind still has to pass through a stage in which he loves God and hates the Devil as whole-heartedly and far more unitedly than he ever yet has done.

Whether or not he find the Devil anew, as Man advances he becomes a more effective hater of all that is selfish, cruel, slothful, ugly and untrue.

But our hatred nowadays is somewhat lacking in purposive direction. We live from hand to mouth in the sphere of emotion, ruled by unconscious tendencies which we should be ruling. To bring these into consciousness, and with the aid of logic to form clearer moral purposes, this would seem to be one of the great needs of the day; while perhaps the modern Devil is pre-eminently intellectual sloth at the service of selfishness.

"Be good, sweet maid, and let who can be clever."  
Thus do we apostrophise the idle apprentice in the soul,

feeling capable of a one-sided saintliness and aware of the weakness of our intellect. It is an exhortation to leave difficult tasks undone and to cultivate strong points. Not thus is made "the grand sweet song of life", which should have parts and harmonies.

There was once a canon of the Church who used to exhort the maidens of his flock to be brave and chivalrous, the youths to be gentle and modest. "For," said he, "God has seen to the opposite virtues that they need no spur." Love of truth needs all the spurring it can get. It is difficult and tedious, through a long life, to aim at being accurate, careful and hopeful, concerning matters of observation and opinion. Many of us take Kingsley's advice to the sweet maid, rather than St. Paul's to the Corinthians,<sup>14</sup> and give up trying.

Others are always hoping to find a short cut to the goal of intellectual effort. The monks of the Middle Ages fancied they had secured one by a compact with the Devil; the present-day theosophists, by a compact with "the Masters."<sup>15</sup> The key to knowledge is handed over upon an undertaking to, abjure good conduct, or evil, as the case may be. Such bargains are futile, since through love and logic alone is the way of life, to be trodden of the unlearned as well as the learned; for learning is the prerogative of the few, but wisdom the birthright of the many, and wisdom, not learning, is the parent and offspring of logic. It is not what a man knows that matters, it is his attitude towards that which he does not know, and this a study of logic helps him to adjust.

Primitive passions are useful in their way, but the logically minded man does not allow them to pervert his judgment, either from lurking places in the secret soul, or boldly flaunting themselves among better motives, disguised as time-honoured prejudice, or the morality of maxims. The logical man is one who submits his will to the will of God, and seeks to observe and to understand the world of facts as God is making



it, a world which includes the thoughts of men's hearts. He may effect little, but at least he will not hinder the goodness, truth and beauty which are perpetually unfolding themselves afresh, and awaiting a friendly atmosphere to grow and flourish.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER XVIII

<sup>1</sup> *Religious Thought and Life in India*, 1883, I. 259. See also Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*, Series I., 1899, pp. 25 *seq.*; Series II. 1st ed., p. 301; Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 386 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, 3rd ed., I. 366, II. 98, 107, 157.

<sup>4</sup> E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1904, II. 241-52; I. pp. 255, 473, 475 and 480.

<sup>5</sup> See F. T. Elworthy, *Horns of Honour*, 1900, p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> See *The Mirror of Perfection*, 2nd ed., p. 121, and Sabatier's *Life of St. Francis*, ch. xvi.

<sup>7</sup> E. g. Huns, Bolsheviks, Anarchists.

<sup>8</sup> See *Chemical Discovery and Invention in the Twentieth Century*, Sir Wm. A. Tilden, 1916, pp. 165 6, 227.

<sup>9</sup> See *supra*, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Pearsall Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 247.

<sup>11</sup> See *supra*, p. 199.

<sup>12</sup> Pearsall Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>13</sup> John Drinkwater.

<sup>14</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 20. "Brothers, do not be children in the sphere of intelligence."

<sup>15</sup> The Masters "have at their command a vast knowledge of nature's laws which is the fruit of an age-long experience. They place this knowledge at the disposal of aspirants under certain conditions, generally that those who ask for it shall do so not by mere words, but by the noble unselfish life they lead, dedicated to the service of humanity." *Theosophy Simplified*, 1916, Irving S. Cooper, p. 15.

## CHAPTER XIX

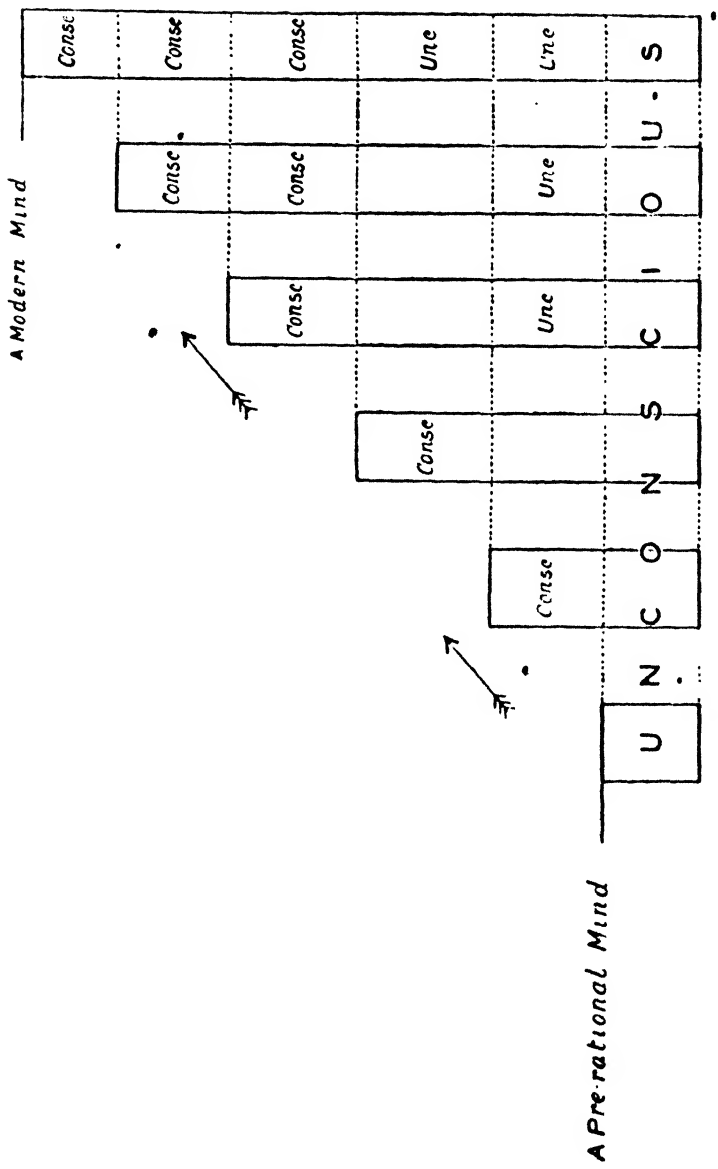
### CONCLUSION—PROGRESS

A house like his own house one man consigns to another.—*Accadian Proverb.*

THE foregoing pages have been devoted to tracing, the influence of the unconscious mind upon rational thought, while at the same time a theory of knowledge and a philosophy of life have been presented, as implications of thought itself. In conclusion, an attempt will be made to summarise some of the theories in question, partly by focussing them upon a few salient objects so as to bring out more distinctly their general bearing upon the problems of life.

The theory of the relation between unconscious and conscious mind may be illustrated by a diagram:—

Each column represents the mind of some typical individual at a certain stage of mental development, whether in the human race or the animal kingdom at large. The horizontal dotted lines show what is meant by more primitive or more advanced levels of mind, and how, in a sense, the unconscious mind of the developed man to-day may be said to reflect the earlier mind of the race. At each stage, the conscious mind typical of that stage, is active in some ways not shared by its primitive predecessors. In the typical mind of the twentieth century these new mental powers, as we have seen, include nice distinctions amongst abstract thoughts; a grasp of subtle analogies and schemes of inter-relation;



and discrimination between subjective and objective truth. The notion of progressive development is also new, as well as the consciousness of the actuality and at the same time of the limitations of volition. To the unconscious mind of the day belong some ideas which were new discoveries at a remote period, together with those instincts, appetites and desires that are constant in the race.

At its lowest levels we see the mind of man approximate that of the lower animals, and so far as we know the contents of this level are incapable of ever becoming conscious. They include the automatic activity, and feelings, of separate sections and organs of the body which may have a sort of local consciousness never yet centralised.

We repeat, that a man's mind at this low level resembles the minds of his animal ancestors, but it is not identical with them. The perpendicular lines which bound our columns, divide each mind from its prototype; each is self-complete and exclusive of the others. If these perpendiculars were omitted the diagram might be taken to represent the development of an individual mind at successive ages, from pre-natal existence to maturity. In this case there would be identity, not merely resemblance, between the various stages; for there is a sense in which the unconscious mind of the middle-aged man is one and the same as his own mind when a child or infant. Some psycho-analysts would seem to omit these perpendiculars for the race, or at any rate they talk as though any individual man on his lower mental levels actually shared the minds of lower types—as though Aristotle had not yet convinced them that the universal does not exist apart from the particular.<sup>1</sup>

If we wish our diagram to illustrate a typical modern mind, any one of the columns, after the first two, will serve the purpose; but we must then imagine it as having three dimensions, and the contents to be circu-

lating so that, except for those in the lowest section, every unconscious element is capable of coming into consciousness.

The theory of volition advanced in this book is bound up with the distinction between conscious and unconscious, since only those activities of man are in the province of the will, which can be summoned into consciousness. In the "perfect man" these would include the contents of every level except the lowest. Granted perfection, there would still be differences of development as between individuals and as between races; one man's conscious would correspond to another man's unconscious mind; while the highest degree of consciousness would be progressively changing in any developing mind. Thus the "perfect man" might not have advanced beyond the intuitive stage of reasoning, but no intuition which affected his conduct would be kept from consciousness by "repression."

In the "imperfect man," however, many motives are prevented from becoming conscious which nevertheless determine conduct. Where new features are not allowed to grow, or where old ones are atrophied, this may be due to repression or it may be from baffling circumstance. ~

"The sensitive" endowed with mediumistic or occult gifts, we take to be one whose mind is disproportionately active at unconscious levels, whether from excess in the unconscious, or from defect in the conscious sphere.

The extremely illogical mind, as we see it, is one in which conscious and unconscious departments are at loggerheads. Logical fallacy is but a species of a larger class, to which belong the neurotic symptom, the nightmare, "ungoverned behaviour" of sorts, prejudices, and mediumistic activities.

Leaving our diagram and turning to another aspect of mind, we see it, at all levels, as an instrument for apprehending reality, its mode of apprehension progressively changing. Primitive knowledge is supplemented

and modified, not destroyed; the nucleus of truth contained in it is developed, and freed from extraneous wrapping.

From the modern standpoint, the truth of any thought is seen to consist partly in a due balance between its subjective and objective characters, partly in its consonance with the whole body of truth constituting the individual's world of thought and of things. "In some way or other," says Prof. Hobhouse, "the whole body of our thought is its own test. If you could get knowledge, or let us say, thought, complete enough you would get it true."<sup>2</sup> He adds, "And perhaps if there is an inner arcanum and sanctuary and impregnable rock of reason, this is it, that her aim and tendency, if not yet her result, are right."<sup>3</sup>

Thus what is once true is true for all time. "We do not know the whole, but all we know belongs to the whole."<sup>4</sup> A truth only ceases to be true to the extent to which it was misunderstood, taken for complete when in fact it was only partial.

As an illustration we may take the Atomic Theory. The Ancient Greeks propounded a theory (from analogy with the Milky Way) that all things were ultimately composed of indestructible atoms. They had not yet come to distinguish clearly between mind and matter, subjective and objective truth, and the theory was applied indiscriminately to thought and to things. It led to the discovery of many true relations amongst objects in the world of thought and of things.

In modern times the theory was taken out of the sphere of subjective fantasy or *a priori* axiom, and established anew as an objective scientific truth. In this form the hypothesis helped towards the discovery of many true facts concerning chemical substances and their inter-relations, and hence indirectly concerning the world of thought. But the other day when it came to dealing with radium, the conception of the chemical atom was found wanting. The theory had to be modified. The

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atom is now said to be composite and destructible, and of such a nature that it can lose a part of itself and yet remain a whole.

Each of these three theories, in turn, is true so far as it goes, and there is nothing in the nature of things or of thought which ever compelled a man to believe it further. The scientific mind at every epoch is of all minds the most open to supplementary truth. First the theory expressed the truth that, things in general, and later, the truth that, inorganic matter, are not capricious and incalculable in their character and actions, but follow unalterable laws. In either form it described those laws so far as known.

The history of any moral truth may be similarly traced. "God is good," said the Ancient Israelite, "hence he has delivered my enemy into my hands that I may avenge the injuries of my people." "God is good," said the follower of Christ, "hence he loves all men, my enemy as well as me, and wills mutual forgiveness of injuries."

Each doctrine concerning the character of God expressed man's ideas of goodness so far as developed. Justice was later supplemented, not destroyed, by love. No conceivable discovery or development of thought could ever overturn the truths severally expressed, it could only supplement them and change their setting.

Truth, as Bishop Wilkins said, is the daughter of Time,<sup>6</sup> or it might be put that Time is the foster-mother of Truth. For time is not felt as an essential factor to the notion of truth as true; it is rather a condition essential to the grasp of that notion. It is only by experience, in the course of time, that man learns more of truth, and learns how to formulate the truth he sees so that the formula shall hold good for all time and not merely for his own day.

Along these lines of thought we arrive at two complementary aspects of truth; (1) in which it is seen as the result of time, and (2) as independent of time.

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The two aspects are brought out plainly by comparing the relation of cause and effect, with that of ground and conclusion. "Ground and conclusion," describes a necessary relation which is independent of time; that is, time is felt to have nothing to do with its intrinsic nature. But this relation is only grasped because attention has been directed to sequences in time of cause and effect.

"All men are mortal, and Socrates is a man." From these grounds it follows as a necessary conclusion (to which the notion of time is irrelevant), that "Socrates is mortal." Thus viewed, the inference is a type of "ground and conclusion," but it was actually arrived at from the experience of cause and effect.

"Always of three things one  
To each e'er the severing hour.  
Old age, sickness or slaughter—  
Will force the doomed soul to depart."

Time helps Truth to grow to maturity. Time is a condition which enables mankind to detect relations which in themselves are independent of time.

Throughout the history of thought, time has been a factor in its development, and its rhythm of growth is described in the "*method of dialectic*." The truth of the day is partial, as all truth must be in a world which is developing; but it is taken for complete, and exaggerated. Reaction follows, and the opposite or complementary truth, in turn, is overstated, till the two are recognised as all along compatible and complementary. One horse is driven too hard, discarded for another, and finally they are worked in double harness.

"There shall never be one lost good," but every good changes its setting.

We may illustrate what is here conceived to be the logical point of view with regard to any commonly accepted belief, by examining the notion of the survival of human personality, a belief still widely prevalent, in



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spite of the common experience in civilised countries of personalities which do not survive brain-disease or the decay of old age. •

Earlier expressions of this belief are felt nowadays to be inadequate, and the modern mind gropes towards a new formulation along two lines.

The first of these lines points to the relatively permanent effects on the race, of any one's life who pursued higher motives rather than lower. For when a man says, "I will eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow I die," his merriment dies with him, since it was at the expense of his neighbours and of future generations. When, on the other hand, he says, "I will act with good will and be happy and make others happy, for to-morrow some will live," his happiness, in a manner, survives him, having increased the sum total of happiness in the world. The effects of anti-social action are destroyed in the long run, since they are against the stream of human progress, and the stream it is which prevails.

The second line towards formulating the notion of immortality pursues analogies which are still only dimly discerned, though felt to be of immense significance. We have seen how a partial truth may shed its incidental trappings; how, for instance, the truth embodied in the atomic theory has survived various embodiments and increased in significance; how the truth embodied in the doctrine that "like produces like" has shed its extraneous circumstances and developed into the law of causation.

In the course of time each of these theories has been raised to the higher category to which implicitly it belonged. By analogy we can imagine that the spiritual part of a man may be raised, at the shedding of his body, to another category in the sphere of spirit, to some higher plane of evolution, where that which was permanent in him is enhanced and emphasised in a wider setting of deeper significance.

We think of this higher plane as independent of time. For just as "cause and effect," experienced in time, can be raised to the category of "ground and conclusion" which are essentially independent of time; so may the essential characteristics of a man's soul, evolved in time, be raised by death to some other category, independent of time and space.

Valuation is the conception of characteristics having absolute value, and these we think of as being the eternal or essential characteristics of personality. No one ever valued evil, falsity or ugliness as such, or ever felt a glow of enthusiasm for their collective promotion as ends of action. On the other hand, no sane man ever lived but had some spark of disinterested admiration for goodness, truth and beauty as experienced in character and action. To promote these ends would seem then to be part of the eternal task, shared by all who ever lived or will live.

For a final illustration of the application of our theories, any religious rite of long standing might be taken, and we will choose that of "*The Lord's Supper*," because in a Christian country it is familiar. We will briefly glance at the significance of the rite at successive levels of mental development.

Primitive man eats the flesh and drinks the blood of a sacrificial victim, imbibing its mana thereby. A "strong" makes strong. He has not yet abstracted the notion of strength from that of a particular strong thing, nor conceived the relation of invariable cause and effect; much less has he considered the circumstances under which strength is imparted by one strong thing to another. He wishes to be strong. He recognises this thing as strong, and he imbibes it in a spontaneous expression of his desire and belief. All else that onlookers may attribute to his act is at most implicit only.

Later, the rational basis of the act becomes clear, and the primitive's descendant draws the inference from

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experience, that "like causes like"; that to eat of the strong brings strength, to eat of the god brings god-like power.

To turn to the Lord's Supper at corresponding stages. We see that it was started originally to carry out an injunction or request of the Lord. It was an act of remembrance at every common meal, which in those days consisted chiefly, and often exclusively, of bread and wine. It had its rise amongst uneducated classes at a primitive epoch, and no doubt a magic significance was at once attached to it in many minds. The bread and wine were also the flesh and blood of a man-god. This double aspect presented no difficulty; the distinct and persistent individuality or uniqueness of things was still undiscerned, as it is to this day in our dreams.<sup>6</sup> It seemed natural that one and the same object should be at the same time, or successively, both bread and flesh, or both wine and blood; no miracle was needed. Magic strength was acquired by imbibing a god-man's body and blood, and at the same time magic virtue was acquired, or danger averted, by an act of ritual done in obedience to a divine command.

Later on, with the growing awareness of natural law, and the distinction between natural and supernatural, the sympathetic magic involved in the rite was also rationalised; and a miracle was required to change the bread and wine into flesh and blood. The ritual act was then elaborated, made less easy to perform; its magic aroma enhanced by conditions, and by penalties for inexact performance.

Meanwhile another and different meaning of the institution, which would seem to have been that originally emphasised, was also developing. This was the fellowship in love of Christ's followers which found expression in their joint communion with himself.

At the present day in developed minds the magic or supernatural element is dropped. Bread and wine no longer constitute the Englishman's ordinary meal, but

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in imagination he refers his communion feast to its original setting. Valuation enables him to appreciate a moral and spiritual beauty in his Lord, which, in turn, evoke worship and reverence of a kind beyond the scope of magic to produce. Eating and drinking become memorial acts which express at the same time symbolically a sense of the supreme value of the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth—a love of the Lord. There is no entirely new element, but the magical features are omitted, and there is a clearer grasp of the reason for and value of the rite.

With individual communicants different meanings, pertaining to different levels of development, might be present together. In that case some would be relatively unconscious. Sometimes it would seem to be the more advanced element which is the more unconscious, as with the Catholic of that narrow type who holds that to receive the sacrament after tasting food is a mortal sin, although he refuse in his heart to consign any one of his acquaintance to the flames of hell on that account. He is not the only religious man who believes in a universal rule to which every individual case is an admitted exception.

Or it may be the more primitive element which is the more unconscious, as with the shallow Rationalist, who girds at communicants because in his unconscious mind he has a sneaking fear of magic penalties, and feels himself a brave fellow for jeering.

Every human belief or custom with a continuous history could be similarly analysed, its developing characters that belong to the future, distinguished from those features which are declining from their zenith in the past.

The view of life which thus presents itself is full of hope, for it is seen that the dearest wishes of the heart, whether past or present, primitive or advanced, are those belonging to the dawn. Two things delay their consummation, ignorance and ill-will. The battle

is not over, but till the present, enlightenment and goodwill win the day.

It may be that a vision of the ultimate triumph of love brings little consolation to the victims of present hatred—a hatred destined to blight the lives not only of themselves, but of their children's children. Neither can all men feel the joy of worship, the passionate and enduring triumph of him who recognises the supremacy of love, its place in the world of thought and of things. "To each his sufferings," and his hopes may be commensurate. The pursuit of logic, as here conceived, confirms and stimulates that larger faith, which, whether he will or no, is replacing the faith of his fathers in the mind of man. It shows that he is not left comfortless; that what he loses is but an outer husk which protected and concealed the seed of spiritual life; that a message put into the mouth of one who suffered is still the solace of a suffering world—

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest."

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER XIX

<sup>1</sup> "Certain patients develop symbolic ideas which can never be accounted for by the experience of their individual life, but only by the history of the human mind. What is displayed is a sort of primitive mythological thinking producing its own primordial forms unlike normal thinking, which makes use of personal experience."—Dr. C. G. Jung, *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, vol. xxxi. p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> *Theory of Knowledge*, 1896, p. 497.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 509.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 605.

<sup>5</sup> In 1684. Cf. Leonardo da Vinci, *Note Books*, ed. McCurdy, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> See *supra*, p. 50.

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